United Nations S/2015/447

Security Council

Distr.: General
17 June 2015

Original: English

Letter dated 11 June 2015 from the Secretary-General addressed to the President of the Security Council

The present letter is submitted pursuant to paragraph 6 of Security Council resolution 2137 (2014), by which I was requested to establish an electoral observer mission to follow and report on the electoral process in Burundi and to report on the work of that mission to the Council before, during and after the elections in 2015.

Since the establishment of the United Nations Electoral Observation Mission in Burundi (MENUB) on 1 January 2015, the Security Council has been briefed by the Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs and by my Special Envoy for the Great Lakes Region at various stages of the process.

As the Security Council is aware, the political and security environment in Burundi has deteriorated significantly, putting MENUB under significant pressure. Pursuant to Council resolution 2137 (2014), MENUB was conceived as a team of 88 personnel (including a 39-strong mission support element) to follow and report on the electoral process.

Political tensions have been on the rise since the announcement on 25 April that the current President of Burundi, Pierre Nkurunziza, would run for a third term, a position that many within his party, the political opposition and civil society consider constitutionally questionable. Against the backdrop of violent confrontations between the police and opponents of the incumbent's bid, a coup d'état was attempted on 13 May, increasing the level of political instability and the prospects for large-scale violence and human rights violations. At least 40 people have been killed, hundreds have been injured and more than 90,000 Burundians have sought refuge in neighbouring countries.

To address this situation, I sent my Special Envoy for the Great Lakes Region to Burundi. He has been spearheading diplomatic initiatives in Bujumbura since his arrival there on 25 April. Working closely with regional partners, he has been facilitating a consultative political dialogue among Burundian stakeholders to build consensus on the measures necessary to create an environment conducive to peaceful, credible and inclusive elections.

Following the recent decision by the Heads of State of the East African Community at an emergency summit on 31 May, in which, among other things, my Special Envoy was urged to continue the political dialogue and a call was made for a postponement of the elections for a period of not less than one and a half months, MENUB will need to play an even more prominent and robust role in supporting credible elections. This will probably include, as has been discussed in the

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consultative political dialogue that my Special Envoy has been facilitating, providing enhanced observer coverage to reassure parties and other stakeholders. Although the dialogue is currently stalled, the requirements outlined below remain essential. There are, at present, no other international observer missions deployed in Burundi.

To ensure that it can perform its mandated responsibilities and meet the increased obligations that will accompany any eventual political agreement, MENUB urgently needs to increase its operational capacity on the ground along two main lines:

(a) Strengthening its electoral observation capacity;

(b) Enhancing its operational support capacity to deliver administrative, logistical and security support to the reinforced mission.

In particular, surge capacity is needed between mid-June and mid-September to coincide with the expected revised electoral calendar. I intend to seek additional staffing positions for MENUB, including more long-term electoral observers and additional security staff.

Various funding sources are being examined to meet the immediate and evolving needs on the ground. In the meantime, MENUB will manage its existing resources as flexibly as possible to meet the new requirements.

I count on the support of the Security Council to strengthen MENUB.

I should be grateful if you could bring the present letter to the attention of the members of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) **BAN** Ki-moon

United Nations S/2015/448

Security Council

Distr.: General
17 June 2015

Original: English

Letter dated 17 June 2015 from the President of the Security Council addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to inform you that your letter dated 11 June 2015 (S/2015/447), concerning your intention to seek additional staffing positions, including more long-term electoral observers and additional security staff, for the United Nations Electoral Observation Mission in Burundi (MENUB), has been brought to the attention of the members of the Security Council, who took note of the information provided and the intention expressed therein.

They also emphasized that it was important for MENUB to play a more prominent, robust and visible role in following and reporting on the electoral process and, to that end, recalled their reporting requests under Security Council resolution 2137 (2014).

(*Signed*) Ramlan Bin **Ibrahim**
President of the Security Council

15-09999 (E) 180615

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United Nations A/69/945–S/2015/449

General Assembly
Security Council

Distr.: General
19 June 2015

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General Assembly
Sixty-ninth session
Agenda items 33 and 38

Protracted conflicts in the GUAM area and their implications for international peace, security and development

The situation in the occupied territories of Azerbaijan

Security Council
Seventieth year

Letter dated 17 June 2015 from the Permanent Representative of Azerbaijan to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Upon instructions from my Government, I have the honour to transmit herewith a statement by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Azerbaijan, dated 16 June 2015, in connection with the decision of the Grand Chamber of the European Court of Human Rights in the case of *Chiragov and others v. Armenia*.

I should be grateful if you would have the present letter and its annex circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda items 33 and 38, and of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Yashar **Aliyev**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

15-10156 (E) 260615

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Annex to the letter dated 17 June 2015 from the Permanent Representative of Azerbaijan to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Statement by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Azerbaijan

16 June 2015

On 16 June 2015, the Grand Chamber of the European Court of Human Rights announced its judgment (merits) in the case of *Chiragov and others v. Armenia* (application no. 13216/05). The case originated in an application against the Republic of Armenia, lodged with the Court on 6 April 2005, by six Azerbaijani nationals forcibly displaced from the occupied Lachin district of Azerbaijan during the Armenian aggression.

The Court ruled in favour of the applicants, recognizing continuing violations by Armenia of a number of their rights under the Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms, namely, those relating to the protection of property (article 1 of Protocol No. 1), the right to respect for private and family life (article 8 of the Convention) and the right to an effective remedy (article 13 of the Convention). Furthermore, the judgment effectively put an end to the persistent denial by Armenia of its responsibility for the unlawful occupation of and military presence in the territories of Azerbaijan.

In the course of the Court's proceedings, in its usual attempts to mislead the international community and distort the root causes and essence of the conflict, Armenia submitted that its jurisdiction did not extend to the territory of Nagorno-Karabakh and the surrounding territories; that it did not and could not have effective control of or exercise any public power over those territories; that it had not participated in the military conflict in question; that it had not taken part in the seizure of the Lachin district or in any later military actions; and that it did not have any military presence in Nagorno-Karabakh and the surrounding territories. Armenia further asserted that "the 'NKR' was a sovereign, independent state possessing all the characteristics of an independent state under international law"; that "it exercised control and jurisdiction over Nagorno-Karabakh and the territories surrounding it"; that "the Republic of Armenia and the 'NKR' were different countries", and that "the 'NKR', since its formation, had carried out its political, social and financial policies independently".

In response to these and other allegations submitted by Armenia, the Court noted in particular that the war had started with calls for the incorporation of Nagorno-Karabakh into Armenia and specifically referred in that regard to a joint resolution on the "reunification", adopted in December 1989 by the Supreme Soviet of the Armenian Soviet Socialist Republic and the Nagorno-Karabakh regional council. The Court established that the citizens of Azerbaijan had been forced to leave Lachin as a result of a military attack on the district in May 1992. The Court stated that Nagorno-Karabakh and the district of Lachin and the other surrounding territories were now under occupation and that the international law of belligerent occupation, as laid down in the relevant provisions of the Regulations concerning the Laws and Customs of War on Land of 1907 (Hague Regulations) and the 1949 Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War, applied to this situation.

The Court confirmed its conclusion from the admissibility decision of 14 December 2011, according to which "the 'NKR' is not recognized as a State under international law by any countries or international organizations", thus reaffirming the position of the international community that overwhelmingly rejected that entity and refused to recognize as legitimate the situation created through the use of force against the territorial integrity of Azerbaijan, accompanied by the notorious practice of ethnic cleansing and other flagrant violations of the peremptory norms of international law.

Furthermore, having examined the evidence presented, the Court confirmed that "the Republic of Armenia, through its military presence and the provision of military equipment and expertise, has been significantly involved in the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict from an early date", that "this military support has been — and continues to be — decisive for the conquest of and continued control over the territories in issue" and that "the evidence ... convincingly shows that the armed forces of Armenia and the 'NKR' are highly integrated". Based on this and other evidence testifying to the political, financial and other dependence of the separatist entity from Armenia, the Court concluded that "... the Republic of Armenia, from the early days of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict, has had a significant and decisive influence over the 'NKR', that the two entities are highly integrated in virtually all important matters and that this situation persists to this day" and that "the 'NKR' and its administration survive by virtue of the military, political, financial and other support given to it by Armenia, which, consequently, exercises effective control over Nagorno-Karabakh and the surrounding territories, including the district of Lachin".

The Court reaffirmed the right of displaced persons to return to their homes or places of habitual residence, and recalled the relevant standards and principles under international humanitarian and human rights law relating to the legal and technical issues surrounding housing and property restitution. In the Court's view, it was not realistic in practice for Azerbaijanis to return to their homes in the current circumstances, which included, inter alia, the continued presence of Armenian and Armenian-backed troops and ceasefire breaches. At the same time, the Court made it clear that the ongoing negotiations within the Minsk Group of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe did not provide a legal justification for interference with the rights of the Azerbaijani internally displaced persons, including the proprietary rights that were still valid, and recalled the obligations of Armenia towards Azerbaijani citizens who had had to flee during the conflict. According to the Court, attempts by the Armenian side to extinguish the land rights of the Azerbaijani displaced persons who had fled the occupied territories could not be considered legally valid. Having found the violation by Armenia of the rights of the Azerbaijani internally displaced persons, the Court concluded that Armenia had failed to discharge the burden of proving the availability to the applicants of a remedy capable of providing redress in respect of their complaints under the Convention and offering reasonable prospects of success. For the same reasons, the Court found that there was no available effective remedy in respect of the denial of access to the applicants' possessions and homes in the district of Lachin.

Accordingly, the conclusion must be that, owing to its initial and continuing aggression against Azerbaijan and the military occupation of its internationally recognized territory (Nagorno-Karabakh and the surrounding areas), the expulsion of hundreds of thousands of citizens of Azerbaijan from the occupied territory and

the denial of their return to their homes and access to their property in those areas, the Republic of Armenia bears full international responsibility for the breaches of international law that have occurred and continue to occur. A key element of State responsibility, and one particularly significant for the present purposes, is the obligation to cease violations, to offer appropriate assurances and guarantees that they will not recur and to provide full reparation for injury. Consequently, Armenia is under the obligation, in the first place, to put an end to the occupation of the territories of Azerbaijan and to withdraw immediately, completely and unconditionally its armed forces from these territories. The implementation of that obligation, which would create necessary conditions for the return of Azerbaijani internally displaced persons, can in no way be considered or introduced as a compromise and, a fortiori, be used as a bargaining chip in the conflict settlement process. It is an established principle of general international law that no territorial acquisition resulting from the threat or use of force shall be recognized as legal, as reaffirmed by Security Council resolutions 822 (1993), 853 (1993), 874 (1993) and 884 (1993), adopted with regard to the armed conflict in question. This understanding also applies to individual rights and freedoms, the violation of which can in no way produce the outcome that was, ab initio, designed by the perpetrator and that would serve for its benefit.

The Republic of Azerbaijan finds it expedient to recall that serious breaches of obligations under peremptory norms of general international law give rise to additional consequences affecting not only Armenia, but also all other States. Those norms include, inter alia, the duties of States to cooperate in order to bring to an end such breaches by lawful means and not to recognize as lawful a situation created by a serious breach, nor render aid or assistance in maintaining that situation. It is therefore critical that the international community insist on the implementation of Security Council resolutions 822 (1993), 853 (1993), 874 (1993) and 884 (1993) demanding the withdrawal of the Armenian occupying forces from the occupied territories of Azerbaijan and supporting the return of displaced persons to their places of origin in safety and dignity.

The resolution of the conflict is possible only on the basis of the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Azerbaijan within its internationally recognized borders. The territorial integrity of Azerbaijan has never been and will never be a subject of negotiations. Azerbaijan remains committed to the conflict settlement process based on this understanding. The sooner Armenia reconciles with this reality, the earlier the conflict will be resolved and the countries and peoples in the region will benefit from the prospects of cooperation and economic development.

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17 June 2015

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Identical letters dated 17 June 2015 from the Permanent Representative of Israel to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council

I am writing to share a list detailing instances in May 2015 (see annex) in which Lebanon violated Security Council resolution 1701 (2006) and breached Israeli sovereignty. As outlined in the present and previous letters that I have sent, Lebanese violations of the Blue Line, and Hizbullah's armed presence in southern Lebanon, are highly visible and occur almost daily. Nonetheless, the vast majority of violations are consistently excluded from the Secretariat's reports.

In just the previous month I sent a letter with new and public evidence that Hizbullah, an internationally recognized terrorist group, is using dozens of villages in southern Lebanon as military staging grounds, civilian centres as weapons depots and its people as human shields. Hizbullah has embedded an extensive military infrastructure among the civilian population in southern Lebanon and aims its weapons at Israeli cities and towns, committing a double war crime. Despite this blatant violation of Security Council resolution 1701 (2006), the Security Council has not condemned Hizbullah and has not demanded that Hizbullah be disarmed.

Israel will not accept any attacks on its territory and, if needed, will exercise its right to self-defence and take all necessary measures to protect its population and territory. Members of the international community must act with a collective purpose to prevent a dangerous escalation. Hizbullah must be disarmed, and the Government of Lebanon must abide by its international commitments and fully implement Security Council resolution 1701 (2006).

I should be grateful if you would circulate the present letter and its annex to the members of the Security Council as a document of the Council.

(*Signed*) Ron **Prosor**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

15-10004 (E) 220615

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Annex to the identical letters dated 17 June 2015 from the Permanent Representative of Israel to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council

Lebanese violations as reported by the Israel Defense Forces

May 2015

Legend	
BL	Blue Line
B	Barrel
TF	Technical fence
IVO	In the vicinity of
TP	Technical post
BP	Boundary pillar
M	Point on the Blue Line (marked after 2000)

Serial No	*Date*	*Time*	*Violation*	*Description*
1.	01/05	06:36	6357	Three (3) armed men were observed IVO B66(2).
2.	01/05	08:55	6358	Two (2) armed men were observed IVO BP11(3).
3.	01/05	10:47	6359	One (1) man was observed crossing the BL IVO Mt. Dov.
4.	01/05	11:11	6360	Two (2) men were observed crossing the BL IVO Mt. Dov.
5.	01/05	13:35	6361	Two (2) men were observed crossing the BL IVO Mt. Dov.
6.	01/05	15:45	6362	One (1) Hizbullah militant was observed performing military recce IVO TP35(1).
7.	02/05	13:35	6363	One (1) man was observed crossing the BL IVO Mt. Dov.
8.	03/05	14:45	6364	One (1) man was observed crossing the BL IVO Mt. Dov.
9.	03/05	15:42	6365	Three (3) men were observed crossing the BL IVO Wazzani River.
10	03/05	17:08	6366	One (1) man was observed crossing the BL IVO Mt. Dov.
11.	04/05	05:56	6367	Six (6) men were observed crossing the BL IVO TP16.
12.	04/05	10:35	6368	Three (3) Hizbullah militants were observed performing military recce IVO B31.
13.	04/05	11:08	6369	One (1) man was observed crossing the BL IVO Mt. Dov.
14.	04/05	16:52	6370	Two (2) men were observed crossing the BL IVO Mt. Dov.

Serial No	*Date*	*Time*	*Violation*	*Description*
15.	05/05	08:35	6371	Two (2) Hizbullah militants were observed performing military recce IVO B3.
16.	05/05	09:41	6372	Two (2) Hizbullah militants were observed performing military recce IVO BP5(1).
17.	05/05	11:00	6373	One (1) man was observed crossing the BL IVO Mt. Dov.
18.	05/05	17:12	6374	Two (2) men were observed crossing the BL IVO Mt. Dov.
19.	06/05	10:38	6375	Three (3) Hizbullah militants were observed performing military recce IVO B63.
20.	06/05	13:35	6376	Three (3) men were observed crossing the BL IVO Mt. Dov.
21.	06/05	15:40	6377	Two (2) Hizbullah militants were observed performing military recce IVO B12/1.
22.	06/05	18:44	6378	One (1) man was observed crossing the BL IVO Mt. Dov.
23.	06/05	20:10	6379	Three (3) armed men were observed IVO B89.
24.	07/05	11:25	6380	Three (3) Hizbullah militants were observed performing military recce IVO BP13.
25.	07/05	12:08	6381	One (1) Hizbullah militant was observed performing military recce IVO BP25(2).
26.	07/05	15:13	6382	Two (2) men were observed crossing the BL IVO Mt. Dov.
27.	07/05	15:33	6383	One (1) man was observed crossing the BL IVO B32.
28.	07/05	16:38	6384	Two (2) men were observed crossing the BL IVO Mt. Dov.
29.	08/05	10:21	6385	Two (2) armed men were observed IVO B18(1).
30.	08/05	12:35	6386	One (1) armed man was observed IVO BP5.
31.	08/05	14:45	6387	Three (3) Hizbullah militants were observed performing military recce IVO BP13(1).
32.	08/05	16:53	6388	Three (3) Hizbullah militants were observed performing military recce IVO BP12(1).
33.	09/05	10:32	6389	Two (2) Hizbullah militants were observed performing military recce IVO BP7.
34.	09/05	13:10	6390	One (1) man was observed crossing the BL IVO Mt. Dov.
35.	09/05	13:40	6391	Four (4) Hizbullah militants were observed performing military recce IVO BP75.
36.	09/05	15:08	6392	One (1) man was observed crossing the BL IVO Mt. Dov.
37.	09/05	15:30	6393	One (1) armed man was observed IVO M9.

Serial No.	*Date*	*Time*	*Violation*	*Description*
38.	09/05	15:57	6394	One (1) armed man was observed IVO B30(1).
39.	09/05	19:10	6395	One (1) armed man was observed IVO M9.
40.	10/05	08:58	6396	Two (2) armed men were observed IVO BP66.
41.	10/05	09:29	6397	One (1) armed man was observed IVO Mt. Dov.
42.	10/05	14:30	6398	One (1) man was observed crossing the BL IVO Mt. Dov.
43.	10/05	14:50	6399	Two (2) men were observed crossing the BL IVO Mt. Dov.
44.	10/05	18:46	6400	One (1) man was observed crossing the BL IVO Mt. Dov.
45.	11/05	05:35	6401	Three (3) men were observed crossing the BL IVO TP16.
46.	11/05	14:07	6402	One (1) armed man was observed IVO Mt. Dov.
47.	11/05	16:16	6403	Two (2) men were observed crossing the BL IVO B47(1).
48.	11/05	16:38	6404	Two (2) men were observed crossing the BL IVO Mt. Dov.
49.	11/05	13:14	6405	Two (2) men were observed crossing the BL IVO Mt. Dov.
50.	12/05	05:40	6406	Three (3) men were observed crossing the BL IVO BP15.
51.	12/05	12:33	6407	One (1) Hizbullah militant was observed performing military recce IVO BP25(2).
52.	12/05	13:40	6408	One (1) Hizbullah militant was observed performing military recce IVO B66.
53.	12/05	13:56	6409	One (1) Hizbullah militant was observed performing military recce IVO B13.
54.	12/05	14:03	6410	Two (2) men were observed crossing the BL IVO Mt. Dov.
55.	12/05	14:16	6411	Two (2) men were observed crossing the BL IVO Mt. Dov.
56.	12/05	15:02	6412	One (1) man was observed crossing the BL IVO Mt. Dov.
57.	12/05	14:30	6413	One (1) Hizbullah militant was observed performing military recce IVO B33.
58.	12/05	18:41	6414	Four (4) Hizbullah militants were observed performing military recce IVO B30.
59.	13/05	12:09	6415	Two (2) Hizbullah militants were observed performing military recce IVO B31.
60.	13/05	12:05	6416	One (1) Hizbullah militant was observed performing military recce IVO B33.
61.	13/05	13:26	6417	One (1) man was observed crossing the BL IVO Mt. Dov.

Serial No.	*Date*	*Time*	*Violation*	*Description*
62.	13/05	13:45	6418	Two (2) Hizbullah militants were observed performing military recce IVO B31.
63.	13/05	14:31	6419	One (1) man was observed crossing the BL IVO Mt. Dov.
64.	13/05	15:50	6420	Three (3) men were observed climbing on the BL barrel IVO B29.
65.	14/05	10:15	6421	Two (2) Hizbullah militants were observed performing military recce IVO BP13.
66.	14/05	14:23	6422	Two (2) men were observed crossing the BL IVO Mt. Dov.
67.	14/05	14:50	6423	Two (2) Hizbullah militants were observed performing military recce IVO BP13.
68.	14/05	15:43	6424	Four (4) men were observed crossing the BL IVO TP16.
69.	14/05	16:16	6425	One (1) armed man was observed IVO BP8/8(1).
70.	14/05	13:01	6426	Two (2) men were observed crossing the BL IVO Mt. Dov.
71.	15/05	11:55	6427	Two (2) men were observed crossing the BL IVO Mt. Dov.
72.	15/05	12:17	6428	Three (3) Hizbullah militants were observed performing military recce IVO BP13.
73.	15/05	13:30	6429	One (1) man was observed crossing the BL IVO Mt. Dov.
74.	15/05	14:30	6430	One (1) man was observed crossing the BL IVO Mt. Dov.
75.	15/05	14:53	6431	One (1) Hizbullah militant was observed performing military recce IVO B11.
76.	16/05	11:09	6432	Two (2) Hizbullah militants were observed performing military recce IVO BP5(1).
77.	16/05	12:12	6433	Four (4) Hizbullah militants were observed performing military recce IVO B3.
78.	16/05	12:21	6434	Four (4) men were observed climbing on the BL barrel IVO B3.
79.	16/05	14:07	6435	Three (3) Hizbullah militants were observed performing military recce IVO BP13.
80.	16/05	14:38	6436	One (1) man was observed crossing the BL IVO Mt. Dov.
81.	16/05	17:31	6437	Two (2) men were observed crossing the BL IVO Mt. Dov.
82.	17/05	14:56	6438	Two (2) men were observed crossing the BL IVO Mt. Dov.
83.	17/05	17:40	6439	Two (2) Hizbullah militants were observed performing military recce IVO BP12(1).

Serial No.	Date	Time	Violation	Description
84.	18/05	12:25	6440	One (1) Hizbullah militant was observed performing military recce IVO BP33.
85.	18/05	11:56	6441	One (1) Hizbullah militant was observed performing military recce IVO B22(1).
86.	18/05	13:46	6442	One (1) man was observed crossing the BL IVO Mt. Dov.
87.	18/05	15:00	6443	One (1) man was observed crossing the BL IVO Mt. Dov.
88.	18/05	18:40	6444	Four (4) Hizbullah militants were observed performing military recce IVO BP13.
89.	19/05	10:42	6445	One (1) Hizbullah militant was observed performing military recce IVO B52(1).
90.	19/05	11:08	6446	One (1) Hizbullah militant was observed performing military recce IVO BP12.
91.	19/05	12:18	6447	Three (3) Hizbullah militants were observed performing military recce IVO Mt. Dov.
92.	19/05	13:41	6448	One (1) man was observed crossing the BL IVO Mt. Dov.
93.	19/05	17:50	6449	Two (2) Hizbullah militants were observed performing military recce IVO BP12.
94.	19/05	17:30	6450	One (1) man was observed crossing the BL IVO BP14(1).
95.	20/05	13:00	6451	One (1) man was observed crossing the BL IVO Mt. Dov.
96.	20/05	15:21	6452	Three (3) Hizbullah militants were observed performing military recce IVO B31.
97.	20/05	16:00	6453	One (1) man was observed crossing the BL IVO Mt. Dov.
98.	20/05	17:30	6454	Two (2) Hizbullah militants were observed performing military recce IVO BP33.
99.	20/05	19:58	6455	One (1) armed man was observed IVO BP12.
100.	21/05	14:00	6456	Two (2) Hizbullah militants were observed performing military recce IVO BP30.
101.	21/05	14:34	6457	One (1) man was observed crossing the BL IVO Mt. Dov.
102.	22/05	10:13	6458	Two (2) Hizbullah militants were observed performing military recce IVO BP13.
103.	22/05	11:40	6459	Four (4) Hizbullah militants were observed performing military recce IVO TP35.
104.	22/05	13:06	6460	One (1) man was observed crossing the BL IVO Mt. Dov.
105.	22/05	14:05	6461	One (1) man was observed crossing the BL IVO Mt. Dov.

Serial No.	*Date*	*Time*	*Violation*	*Description*
106.	22/05	19:17	6462	Two (2) armed men were observed IVO BP20(1).
107.	23/05	10:02	6463	Two (2) Hizbullah militants were observed performing military recce IVO BP13.
108.	23/05	10:28	6464	Two (2) Hizbullah militants were observed performing military recce IVO BP5(1).
109.	23/05	12:19	6465	One (1) Hizbullah militant was observed performing military recce IVO B31.
110.	23/05	12:35	6466	Two (2) Hizbullah militants were observed performing military recce IVO B56(1).
111.	23/05	16:13	6467	One (1) man was observed crossing the BL IVO Mt. Dov.
112.	23/05	16:35	6468	Two (2) Hizbullah militants were observed performing military recce IVO BP33.
113.	23/05	17:08	6469	One (1) man was observed crossing the BL IVO Mt. Dov.
114.	24/05	01:15	6470	Two (2) armed men were observed IVO Mt. Dov.
115.	24/05	10:30	6471	Two (2) Hizbullah militants were observed performing military recce IVO BP13.
116.	24/05	10:45	6472	One (1) Hizbullah militant was observed performing military recce IVO BP12(1).
117.	24/05	11:27	6473	One (1) man was observed crossing the BL IVO Mt. Dov.
118.	24/05	17:10	6474	Two (2) men were observed crossing the BL IVO Mt. Dov.
119.	24/05	18:20	6475	One (1) armed man was observed IVO Wazzani.
120.	25/05	10:40	6476	One (1) Hizbullah militant was observed performing military recce IVO B82.
121.	25/05	11:21	6477	Two (2) Hizbullah militants were observed performing military recce IVO B25(1).
122.	25/05	14:03	6478	One (1) man was observed crossing the BL IVO Mt. Dov.
123.	26/05	06:58	6479	Two (2) men were observed crossing the BL IVO TP16.
124.	26/05	12:21	6480	One (1) man was observed crossing the BL IVO Mt. Dov.
125.	26/05	15:38	6481	Three (3) Hizbullah militants were observed performing military recce IVO Mt. Dov.
126.	26/05	16:09	6482	Three (3) men were observed crossing the BL IVO Mt. Dov.
127.	26/05	17:29	6483	One (1) man was observed crossing the BL IVO TP16.
128.	26/05	17:29	6484	Two (2) men were observed crossing the BL IVO Mt. Dov.

Serial No.	*Date*	*Time*	*Violation*	*Description*
129.	26/05	16:22	6485	Two (2) men were observed crossing the BL IVO Mt. Dov.
130.	26/05	18:55	6486	Two (2) Hizbullah militants were observed performing military recce IVO BP13.
131.	27/05	04:57	6487	Two (2) men were observed crossing the BL IVO TP16.
132.	27/05	07:00	6488	Two (2) Hizbullah militants were observed performing military recce IVO BP13.
133.	27/05	11:18	6489	Two (2) Hizbullah militants were observed performing military recce IVO B52(2).
134.	27/05	14:16	6490	One (1) man was observed crossing the BL IVO Mt. Dov.
135.	27/05	14:57	6491	One (1) Hizbullah militant was observed performing military recce IVO BP33.
136.	27/05	15:22	6492	One (1) man was observed crossing the BL IVO Mt. Dov.
137.	27/05	18:22	6493	One (1) Hizbullah militant was observed performing military recce IVO B31.
138.	28/05	14:13	6494	One (1) man was observed crossing the BL IVO Mt. Dov.
139.	28/05	13:13	6495	One (1) man was observed crossing the BL IVO Mt. Dov.
140.	28/05	15:54	6496	One (1) man was observed crossing the BL IVO Mt. Dov.
141.	28/05	15:55	6497	Two (2) Hizbullah militants were observed performing military recce IVO B31.
142.	29/05	09:43	6498	Two (2) Hizbullah militants were observed performing military recce IVO BP12(1).
143.	29/05	11:12	6499	One (1) Hizbullah militant was observed performing military recce IVO BP33.
144.	29/05	14:48	6500	One (1) man was observed crossing the BL IVO Mt. Dov.
145.	29/05	15:23	6501	One (1) man was observed crossing the BL IVO Mt. Dov.
146.	29/05	16:57	6502	One (1) armed man was observed IVO Mt. Dov.
147.	30/05	09:49	6503	Two (2) Hizbullah militants were observed performing military recce IVO B31.
148.	30/05	12:57	6504	Two (2) men were observed crossing the BL IVO Mt. Dov.
149.	30/05	14:06	6505	One (1) man was observed crossing the BL IVO Mt. Dov.
150.	30/05	13:55	6506	One (1) armed man was observed IVO Mt. Dov.
151.	30/05	14:49	6507	One (1) man was observed crossing the BL IVO Mt. Dov.

Serial No.	*Date*	*Time*	*Violation*	*Description*
152.	30/05	16:17	6508	Three (3) men were observed crossing the BL IVO Mt. Dov.
153.	30/05	19:15	6509	Two (2) armed men were observed IVO Mt. Dov.
154.	31/05	12:07	6510	One (1) man was observed crossing the BL IVO Mt. Dov.
155.	31/05	12:57	6511	One (1) armed man was observed IVO Mt. Dov.

United Nations S/2015/451

Security Council

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17 June 2015

Original: English

Letter dated 17 June 2015 from the President of the Security Council addressed to the Secretary-General

In my capacity as President of the Security Council, I am forwarding to you a letter dated 11 June 2015 (see annex), from the Chair of the Security Council Working Group on Children and Armed Conflict established by Security Council resolution 1612 (2005), based on the Working Group's conclusions adopted on 8 May 2015 (S/AC.51/2015/1).

(*Signed*) Ramlan Bin **Ibrahim**
President of the Security Council

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Annex to the letter dated 17 June 2015 from the President of the Security Council addressed to the Secretary-General

At its 53rd meeting, on 6 February 2015, the Security Council Working Group on Children and Armed Conflict examined the first report of the Secretary-General on children and armed conflict in South Sudan (S/2014/884), covering the period from 1 March 2011 to 30 September 2014. At its 54th meeting, on 8 May 2015, the Working Group adopted its Conclusions on children and armed conflict in South Sudan (S/AC.51/2015/1).

In follow up to the recommendations of the Working Group, approved by the Security Council, and subject to and consistent with applicable international law and relevant Security Council resolutions, including resolutions 1612 (2005), 1882 (2009), 1998 (2011), 2068 (2012) and 2143 (2014), I am entrusted, in my capacity as Chair of the Working Group, to:

(a) Request you to ensure that the country task force on monitoring and reporting in South Sudan, and other relevant United Nations agencies, continue their efforts to support, within their respective mandates, the Government of South Sudan in addressing violations and abuses committed against children in armed conflict in violation of applicable international law, and to ensure that the matter of children and armed conflict in South Sudan is included as a specific aspect in all South Sudan country-specific reports;

(b) Also request you to ensure that the country task force on monitoring and reporting in South Sudan continues its engagement with the Government of South Sudan to implement the recommitment agreement to the revised action plan to end and prevent all violations committed against children and to continue advocacy for the release and reintegration of children associated with armed forces and armed groups, including in the context of the Cessation of Hostilities Agreement;

(c) Request you to call upon the country task force on monitoring and reporting in South Sudan to continue its engagement with the Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA) in Opposition, in line with resolution 1612 (2005), to facilitate the full implementation of the Commitment Agreement to End Grave Violations against Children, signed by the Chairman of the SPLA in Opposition, Riek Machar, and the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict on 10 May 2014, and the development of an action plan for SPLA in Opposition;

(d) Request you to continue to ensure the effectiveness of the monitoring and reporting mechanism on children and armed conflict in South Sudan and of the child protection component of the United Nations Mission in South Sudan.

(*Signed*) Ramlan Bin **Ibrahim**
Chair
Security Council Working Group
on Children and Armed Conflict

United Nations A/69/947–S/2015/452

General Assembly
Security Council

Distr.: General
17 June 2015

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General Assembly
Sixty-ninth session
Agenda item 42
Question of Cyprus

Security Council
Seventieth year

Letter dated 17 June 2015 from the Permanent Representative of Cyprus to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Upon instructions from my Government, I transmit herewith two separate annexes recording the infringements of international air traffic regulations and violations of the national airspace of the Republic of Cyprus by Turkey (see annex I), as well as the illegal use of closed ports by Turkish warships during the month of May 2015 (see annex II). It should also be noted that Turkish commercial aircraft systematically use the illegal Tympou airport.

Furthermore, I wish to inform you that Turkey and the occupation regime illegally issued Notices to Airmen (NOTAMs) regarding the dates of 7, 8 and 26 to 30 May, relating to exercises of the Turkish Air Force and Military Navy.

The actions taken by Turkey are clearly aimed at undermining the sovereignty of the Republic of Cyprus, bolstering the continuing de facto division and upgrading the secessionist entity's status, by claiming a purported airspace over the occupied territory of the Republic. Additionally, Turkey continues to systematically harass civilian and military aircraft within the Nicosia Flight Information Region (FIR) via radio calls. Meanwhile, Nicosia FIR infringements and violations of the national airspace of the Republic of Cyprus continue unabated. Turkey's policy of persistently breaching international law and defying international rules and regulations puts the safety of international civil aviation at risk, impacts negatively on the stability of the region and causes difficulties for air traffic over Cyprus. On behalf of my Government, I strongly protest the continuing infringements of international air traffic regulations and the violations of the national airspace and the territorial waters of the Republic of Cyprus by Turkey and appeal for their immediate cessation.

I would be grateful if you would circulate the present letter and its annexes as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda item 42, and of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Nicholas **Emiliou**

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Annex I to the letter dated 17 June 2015 from the Permanent Representative of Cyprus to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Airborne violations

Date	*Time*	*Nature of violation*
4 May	0850-1110	One Turkish military helicopter infringed international air traffic regulations and violated the national airspace of the Republic of Cyprus by entering the Nicosia Flight Information Region (FIR) and the national airspace of the Republic of Cyprus without diplomatic permit or contacting Nicosia area control centre (ACC).
	1516-1543	One CN-235 Turkish military aircraft infringed international air traffic regulations and violated the national airspace of the Republic of Cyprus by entering the Nicosia FIR and the national airspace of the Republic of Cyprus without diplomatic permit or contacting Nicosia ACC, landing at the illegal Tympou airport.
5 May	0917-1201	One CN-235 Turkish military aircraft infringed international air traffic regulations and violated the national airspace of the Republic of Cyprus by entering the Nicosia FIR and the national airspace of the Republic of Cyprus without diplomatic permit or contacting Nicosia ACC.
	2015-2220	Two Turkish military helicopters infringed international air traffic regulations and violated the national airspace of the Republic of Cyprus by entering the Nicosia FIR and the national airspace of the Republic of Cyprus without diplomatic permit or contacting Nicosia ACC.
6 May	0628-0640	One GLF-5 Turkish aircraft infringed international air traffic regulations and violated the national airspace of the Republic of Cyprus by entering the Nicosia FIR and the national airspace of the Republic of Cyprus without diplomatic permit or contacting Nicosia ACC, landing at the illegal Tympou airport.
	0820-0828	One GLF-5 Turkish aircraft infringed international air traffic regulations and violated the national airspace of the Republic of Cyprus by entering the Nicosia FIR and the national airspace of the Republic of Cyprus without diplomatic permit or contacting Nicosia ACC, having departed from the illegal Tympou airport.
	2310-2325	One GLF-5 Turkish aircraft infringed international air traffic regulations and violated the national airspace of the Republic of Cyprus by entering the Nicosia FIR and the national airspace of the Republic of Cyprus without diplomatic permit or contacting Nicosia ACC, landing at the illegal Tympou airport.

Date	*Time*	*Nature of violation*
	2350-2359	One GLF-5 Turkish aircraft infringed international air traffic regulations and violated the national airspace of the Republic of Cyprus by entering the Nicosia FIR and the national airspace of the Republic of Cyprus without diplomatic permit or contacting Nicosia ACC, having departed from the illegal Tympou airport.
7 May	0837-1100	One CN-235 Turkish military aircraft infringed international air traffic regulations and violated the national airspace of the Republic of Cyprus by entering the Nicosia FIR and the national airspace of the Republic of Cyprus without diplomatic permit or contacting Nicosia ACC.
	0953-1112	One Cougar Turkish military helicopter infringed international air traffic regulations and violated the national airspace of the Republic of Cyprus by entering the Nicosia FIR and the national airspace of the Republic of Cyprus without diplomatic permit or contacting Nicosia ACC.
	1254-1323	One CN-235 Turkish military aircraft infringed international air traffic regulations and violated the national airspace of the Republic of Cyprus by entering the Nicosia FIR and the national airspace of the Republic of Cyprus without diplomatic permit or contacting Nicosia ACC, having departed from the illegal Tympou airport.
8 May	1015-1048	One Turkish military helicopter infringed international air traffic regulations and violated the national airspace of the Republic of Cyprus by entering the Nicosia FIR and the national airspace of the Republic of Cyprus without diplomatic permit or contacting Nicosia ACC.
	1030-1210	One Cougar Turkish military helicopter infringed international air traffic regulations and violated the national airspace of the Republic of Cyprus by entering the Nicosia FIR and the national airspace of the Republic of Cyprus without diplomatic permit or contacting Nicosia ACC.
11 May	1107-1300	One CN-235 Turkish military aircraft infringed international air traffic regulations by entering the Nicosia FIR without diplomatic permit or contacting Nicosia ACC.
12 May	2028-2232	Two Turkish military helicopters infringed international air traffic regulations and violated the national airspace of the Republic of Cyprus by entering the Nicosia FIR and the national airspace of the Republic of Cyprus without diplomatic permit or contacting Nicosia ACC.
13 May	1052-1153	One Turkish military helicopter infringed international air traffic regulations and violated the national airspace of the Republic of Cyprus by entering the Nicosia FIR and the national airspace of the Republic of Cyprus without diplomatic permit or contacting Nicosia ACC.

Date	*Time*	*Nature of violation*
	1427-1637	One CN-235 Turkish military aircraft infringed international air traffic regulations by entering the Nicosia FIR without diplomatic permit or contacting Nicosia ACC.
	1535-1550	Four F-16 Turkish military aircraft infringed international air traffic regulations by entering the Nicosia FIR without diplomatic permit or contacting Nicosia ACC.
14 May	0935-1115	One Cougar Turkish military helicopter infringed international air traffic regulations and violated the national airspace of the Republic of Cyprus by entering the Nicosia FIR and the national airspace of the Republic of Cyprus without diplomatic permit or contacting Nicosia ACC.
14-15 May	2250-0150	Two Turkish military helicopters infringed international air traffic regulations and violated the national airspace of the Republic of Cyprus by entering the Nicosia FIR and the national airspace of the Republic of Cyprus without diplomatic permit or contacting Nicosia ACC.
15 May	1630-1718	One CN-235 Turkish military aircraft infringed international air traffic regulations by entering the Nicosia FIR without diplomatic permit or contacting Nicosia ACC.
16 May	1018-1032	Two F-16 Turkish military aircraft infringed international air traffic regulations by entering the Nicosia FIR without diplomatic permit or contacting Nicosia ACC.
	1022-1103	Four F-16 Turkish military aircraft infringed international air traffic regulations by entering the Nicosia FIR without diplomatic permit or contacting Nicosia ACC.
18 May	1054-1155	One Turkish military helicopter infringed international air traffic regulations and violated the national airspace of the Republic of Cyprus by entering the Nicosia FIR and the national airspace of the Republic of Cyprus without diplomatic permit or contacting Nicosia ACC.
	1115-1132	One C-130 Turkish military aircraft infringed international air traffic regulations and violated the national airspace of the Republic of Cyprus by entering the Nicosia FIR and the national airspace of the Republic of Cyprus without diplomatic permit or contacting Nicosia ACC, landing at the illegal Tympou airport.
	2241-2300	One C-130 Turkish military aircraft infringed international air traffic regulations and violated the national airspace of the Republic of Cyprus by entering the Nicosia FIR and the national airspace of the Republic of Cyprus without diplomatic permit or contacting Nicosia ACC, landing at the illegal Tympou airport.

Date	*Time*	*Nature of violation*
19 May	1219-1238	One C-160 Turkish military aircraft infringed international air traffic regulations and violated the national airspace of the Republic of Cyprus by entering the Nicosia FIR and the national airspace of the Republic of Cyprus without diplomatic permit or contacting Nicosia ACC, landing at the illegal Tympou airport.
	1350-1408	One C-160 Turkish military aircraft infringed international air traffic regulations and violated the national airspace of the Republic of Cyprus by entering the Nicosia FIR and the national airspace of the Republic of Cyprus without diplomatic permit or contacting Nicosia ACC, having departed from the illegal Tympou airport.
	1844-1858	One C-130 Turkish military aircraft infringed international air traffic regulations and violated the national airspace of the Republic of Cyprus by entering the Nicosia FIR and the national airspace of the Republic of Cyprus without diplomatic permit or contacting Nicosia ACC, having departed from the illegal Tympou airport.
20 May	1036-1235	Two Turkish military helicopters infringed international air traffic regulations and violated the national airspace of the Republic of Cyprus by entering the Nicosia FIR and the national airspace of the Republic of Cyprus without diplomatic permit or contacting Nicosia ACC.
	2139-2151	One C-130 Turkish military aircraft infringed international air traffic regulations and violated the national airspace of the Republic of Cyprus by entering the Nicosia FIR and the national airspace of the Republic of Cyprus without diplomatic permit or contacting Nicosia ACC, having departed from the illegal Tympou airport.
21 May	1053-1125	One Turkish military helicopter infringed international air traffic regulations and violated the national airspace of the Republic of Cyprus by entering the Nicosia FIR and the national airspace of the Republic of Cyprus without diplomatic permit or contacting Nicosia ACC.
	1348-1515	One CN-235 Turkish military aircraft infringed international air traffic regulations by entering the Nicosia FIR without diplomatic permit or contacting Nicosia ACC.
	1409-1459	Three F-4 and two F-16 Turkish military aircraft infringed international air traffic regulations and violated the national airspace of the Republic of Cyprus by entering the Nicosia FIR and the national airspace of the Republic of Cyprus without diplomatic permit or contacting Nicosia ACC.
	1415-1510	Two F-16 Turkish military aircraft infringed international air traffic regulations by entering the Nicosia FIR without diplomatic permit or contacting Nicosia ACC.

Date	*Time*	*Nature of violation*
22 May	1152-1227	One Turkish military helicopter infringed international air traffic regulations and violated the national airspace of the Republic of Cyprus by entering the Nicosia FIR and the national airspace of the Republic of Cyprus without diplomatic permit or contacting Nicosia ACC.
24 May	1805-1941	One S-70 Turkish military helicopter infringed international air traffic regulations by entering the Nicosia FIR without diplomatic permit or contacting Nicosia ACC.
25 May	0600-0643	One Turkish military helicopter infringed international air traffic regulations by entering the Nicosia FIR without diplomatic permit or contacting Nicosia ACC.
	0620-0646	One S-70 Turkish military helicopter infringed international air traffic regulations by entering the Nicosia FIR without diplomatic permit or contacting Nicosia ACC.
	0642-1004	One CN-235 Turkish military aircraft infringed international air traffic regulations and violated the national airspace of the Republic of Cyprus by entering the Nicosia FIR and the national airspace of the Republic of Cyprus without diplomatic permit or contacting Nicosia ACC.
	1209-1227	One C-160 Turkish military aircraft infringed international air traffic regulations and violated the national airspace of the Republic of Cyprus by entering the Nicosia FIR and the national airspace of the Republic of Cyprus without diplomatic permit or contacting Nicosia ACC, landing at the illegal Tympou airport.
	1343-1443	Two F-16 Turkish military aircraft infringed international air traffic regulations by entering the Nicosia FIR without diplomatic permit or contacting Nicosia ACC.
	1350-1511	One CN-235 Turkish military aircraft infringed international air traffic regulations by entering the Nicosia FIR without diplomatic permit or contacting Nicosia ACC.
	1407-1501	Two F-4 and two F-16 Turkish military aircraft infringed international air traffic regulations and violated the national airspace of the Republic of Cyprus by entering the Nicosia FIR and the national airspace of the Republic of Cyprus without diplomatic permit or contacting Nicosia ACC.
	1732-1745	One C-160 Turkish military aircraft infringed international air traffic regulations and violated the national airspace of the Republic of Cyprus by entering the Nicosia FIR and the national airspace of the Republic of Cyprus without diplomatic permit or contacting Nicosia ACC, having departed from the illegal Tympou airport.

Date	*Time*	*Nature of violation*
26 May	1024-1140	One Turkish military helicopter infringed international air traffic regulations and violated the national airspace of the Republic of Cyprus by entering the Nicosia FIR and the national airspace of the Republic of Cyprus without diplomatic permit or contacting Nicosia ACC.
	1404-1420	One GLF-4 Turkish aircraft infringed international air traffic regulations and violated the national airspace of the Republic of Cyprus by entering the Nicosia FIR and the national airspace of the Republic of Cyprus without diplomatic permit or contacting Nicosia ACC, landing at the illegal Tympou airport.
	1920-1930	One GLF-4 Turkish aircraft infringed international air traffic regulations and violated the national airspace of the Republic of Cyprus by entering the Nicosia FIR and the national airspace of the Republic of Cyprus without diplomatic permit or contacting Nicosia ACC, having departed from the illegal Tympou airport.
27 May	1508-1549	One Turkish military helicopter infringed international air traffic regulations and violated the national airspace of the Republic of Cyprus by entering the Nicosia FIR and the national airspace of the Republic of Cyprus without diplomatic permit or contacting Nicosia ACC.
	1530-1615	One AB-412 Turkish military helicopter infringed international air traffic regulations by entering the Nicosia FIR without diplomatic permit or contacting Nicosia ACC.
28 May	0942-1002	One CN-235 Turkish military aircraft infringed international air traffic regulations and violated the national airspace of the Republic of Cyprus by entering the Nicosia FIR and the national airspace of the Republic of Cyprus without diplomatic permit or contacting Nicosia ACC, landing at the illegal Tympou airport.
29 May	1551-1607	One CN-235 Turkish military aircraft infringed international air traffic regulations and violated the national airspace of the Republic of Cyprus by entering the Nicosia FIR and the national airspace of the Republic of Cyprus without diplomatic permit or contacting Nicosia ACC, having departed from the illegal Tympou airport.

Annex II to the letter dated 17 June 2015 from the Permanent Representative of Cyprus to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Naval violations

Dates	*Nature of violation*
23-30 May	One AG-6 Turkish net laying ship violated the territorial waters of the Republic of Cyprus and illegally used the closed ports of Ammochostos and Kerynia.

United Nations S/2015/453

Security Council

Distr.: General
18 June 2015

Original: English

Report of the Secretary-General on the protection of civilians in armed conflict

I. Introduction

1. The present report is submitted pursuant to the request contained in the statement by the President of the Security Council of 12 February 2013 (S/PRST/2013/2).

2. The present report, which is my eleventh on the protection of civilians in armed conflict, covers the period from November 2013 to May 2015. It reviews the state of the protection of civilians in key conflict-related crises, identifies existing and emerging protection challenges and highlights ongoing efforts to strengthen the protection of civilians. Finally, it provides recommendations for strengthening the protection of civilians in armed conflict and promoting a more consistent and systematic approach by the Security Council.

3. Over the past decade, the number of people in need of international humanitarian assistance has tripled. The overwhelming majority of those people are civilians affected by armed conflict or complex emergencies, which account for about 80 per cent of the crises requiring an international humanitarian response. Approximately 42 per cent of the world's poor now live in conflict-affected and fragile States, and that figure is expected to rise to 62 per cent by 2030. Protecting those people from harm and preserving their dignity, in particular by upholding international law and seeking accountability for violations, should be at the very top of the international community's agenda.

4. Yet shocking levels of brutality and casual disregard for human life and dignity have come to characterize most of today's armed conflicts. Civilians are killed and maimed in targeted or indiscriminate attacks. They are tortured, taken hostage and disappeared, forcibly recruited into armed groups, displaced from their homes, separated from their families and denied access to the most basic necessities. Sexual and gender-based violence is widespread. Direct attacks on schools and hospitals have become common features of many armed conflicts. Humanitarian and health-care workers are deliberately targeted. In many conflicts, the most basic rules of international humanitarian law are routinely violated with little or no accountability. Impunity remains widespread across conflicts and fuels further violations.

5. The human cost of this dynamic is devastating. Displacement due to conflicts and violence has reached its highest level since the Second World War: an estimated

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38 million people have been displaced within their own country and a further 13 million are refugees abroad. In 2014 alone, about 11 million people had to flee their homes and seek safety within their own country to escape attacks or for fear of being attacked. This is the equivalent of 30,000 people uprooted from their homes every day, with little hope of return. The average length of conflict-induced internal displacement is about 17 years. For many, displacement marks the beginning of a lifelong struggle for security and stability.

6. Upholding humanity is at the core of humanitarian action and of the Charter of the United Nations. Civilians caught in armed conflict are among the world's most vulnerable. They have a right to be protected. Yet the commitment and the ability of the international community to protect civilians in conflict and preserve their dignity are being challenged at every turn. Over the past 16 years, the Security Council has established a robust normative framework on the protection of civilians, embodied in various resolutions and presidential statements and founded on the principles of international humanitarian, human rights and refugee law. The Council has also significantly strengthened the protection and human rights mandates of many United Nations peace operations. This has been bolstered by the regular updating of the aide-memoire for the consideration of issues pertaining to the protection of civilians and the establishment of the Council's informal expert group on the protection of civilians. The establishment by the Council of thematic mandates on children and armed conflict and conflict-related sexual violence has been crucial in garnering political momentum and promoting responsive action on those issues. However, despite those improvements in the normative sphere, the task of protecting civilians on the ground has been more pronounced in its failures than its successes.

7. The five core challenges to the protection of civilians, outlined in my previous reports, continue to be highly relevant. First, we must strengthen compliance with international law by parties to conflict, in particular in the conduct of hostilities. A united Security Council has a critical role to play in this area. The lack of enforcement and continued violations have eroded international humanitarian and human rights law. Second, we must ensure more systematic engagement with non-State armed groups to press for their compliance with the law and their assurance of the protection of civilians and humanitarian access to people in need. Third, building on the progress to date, we must further strengthen the role of peacekeeping operations in the protection of civilians. Peacekeepers must be given the resources and capabilities necessary to fulfil these mandates while actively engaging national authorities in fulfilling their primary responsibility to protect civilians. Fourth, we need more concerted action from all relevant actors, including those with leverage over parties to conflict, to ensure rapid and unimpeded humanitarian access to people in need of protection and assistance. Where parties to conflict withhold consent to relief operations on arbitrary grounds, there must be consequences. Fifth, there remains an overwhelming need to ensure that those who violate the law are held accountable for their actions. Anything less promotes a culture of impunity within which violations flourish. My previous reports include numerous recommendations to assist the Council, Member States and parties to conflict in meeting the challenges. Those recommendations warrant serious consideration and action. States have the primary responsibility for protecting civilians on their territory, and the ultimate aim of my recommendations is to reinforce, not replace, the responsibility of States.

8. We need to use the World Humanitarian Summit, to be held in 2016, to launch an ambitious agenda for change and measurably reduce violence and the impact of conflicts on civilians, with clear goals and targets. We also need to build on the work of the post-2015 process to truly ensure that "no one is left behind", least of all the displaced and others affected by conflict. Clearly articulating our ambitions to reduce violence by 2030 and identifying concrete targets and indicators will promote measurability, dialogue and action in this critical area.

II. Country-specific concerns

9. Despite some progress at the normative level in the past 18 months, the general state of protection on the ground remains bleak. Civilians continue to constitute the vast majority of victims of armed conflict, and widespread violations of international humanitarian and human rights law are frequently accompanied by a complete lack of accountability.

Afghanistan

10. There was a sharp rise in civilian casualties and displacement in 2014, with women and children disproportionately affected. The United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) reported that there were more civilian casualties in 2014 (10,548) than in any other year since 2009, a 22 per cent increase over 2013. Of particular concern was the dramatic increase (40 per cent) in child casualties. There was also a sharp rise in civilian casualties resulting from the use of explosive weapons in populated areas. More than 166,000 people were newly displaced in 2014, bringing the total number of internally displaced persons to more than 805,000. In addition, since June 2014, Afghanistan has received 280,000 refugees from Pakistan, while Pakistan continues to host about 1.5 million Afghan refugees. In February 2014, the Government adopted a comprehensive national policy on internal displacement; the international community must support the Government's efforts to ensure its effective implementation. Humanitarian access remains a serious challenge owing to high levels of insecurity. Attacks on humanitarian personnel and assets continued to increase throughout 2014, including the abduction and murder of five national staff of Save the Children International.

Central African Republic

11. Sectarian violence, significant levels of displacement, persistent insecurity and fear continued to mark the country in 2014. Despite progress in 2015 on the political front, the humanitarian situation remains dire: more than 60 per cent of the population now require humanitarian assistance. While the security situation in Bangui and some other areas improved following the deployment of international forces and the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic in 2014, clashes between armed groups and attacks on civilians remain widespread. The ongoing difficulties of local and national institutions in re-establishing State authority have made the protection of civilians extremely challenging. The International Commission of Inquiry on the Central African Republic has documented extrajudicial killings, arbitrary arrests and detention, abductions and torture. Anti-Balaka armed groups are systematically targeting minority groups. Nearly the entire Muslim population of the western part of the country, including Bangui, has fled, and many have been deliberately

attacked. Some 6,000 to 10,000 children have been recruited or used by armed groups, and sexual exploitation and abuse by the parties to the conflict and by international forces continues to be reported. About one fifth of the population has been displaced, with 463,000 internally displaced persons and 430,000 refugees in neighbouring States. Some 36,000 internally displaced persons from religious and ethnic minorities are trapped in enclaves surrounded by anti-Balaka elements and effectively cut off from food and medical supplies. Reports have emerged of Fulani herders being enslaved, tortured, raped, maimed and killed. Humanitarian access remains difficult in many areas owing to active hostilities, violence against humanitarian personnel and interference in the implementation of humanitarian activities. Eighteen humanitarian workers were killed in the past 12 months alone.

Colombia

12. Although 2014 saw welcome progress in the peace negotiations between the Government and the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia-People's Army (FARC-EP), this was not matched by an overall improvement in the humanitarian situation on the ground, with indigenous groups and Afro-descendant Colombians particularly affected by the ongoing violence and insecurity. FARC-EP has maintained its control over communities, including through mobility restrictions, extortion and threats. Moreover, conflict with the National Liberation Army (ELN) and violence by post-demobilization armed groups and other local armed structures continues. The risk of landmine accidents remains high in large areas of the country. Concerns have been raised that proposed military justice legislation may undermine the fight against impunity for extrajudicial executions and other alleged grave violations committed by the military during the conflict. More than 150,000 people were newly displaced by conflict and violence in 2014, bringing the total number of internally displaced persons to more than 6 million. The Victims and Land Restitution Law (2011) offers an important opportunity to provide remedies for millions of internally displaced persons, but so far only a small number have benefited from it.

Democratic Republic of the Congo

13. For two decades, persistent conflict in the eastern provinces and instability in other parts of the country have led to recurrent and protracted humanitarian crises, high malnutrition rates and outbreaks of disease. In the past 18 months, armed groups and government forces have continued to commit violations, including unlawful killings, torture, rape and looting, especially in the east. These include the summary execution by the Allied Democratic Forces of at least 237 civilians in the territory of Beni, North Kivu, between October 2014 and May 2015. Conflict-related sexual violence remains endemic. Concerns remain about attacks on schools and the recruitment and use of children by armed groups. Almost 2.8 million people have been internally displaced and 443,000 people have sought refuge in neighbouring States. While in some areas of relative calm the displaced have returned to their places of origin, overall displacement is increasing. In Katanga Province alone, 180,000 people were displaced between December 2013 and October 2014 as a result of fighting and insecurity. In addition, some 10,000 refugees arrived from Burundi in April and May 2015. Humanitarian access is limited in many areas as a result of insecurity, poor infrastructure and attacks on humanitarian workers and other constraints.

Iraq

14. The scale of the crisis in Iraq has increased dramatically since my previous report (S/2013/689) as targeted attacks on civilians, sexual and gender-based violence, and intimidation, often along ethnic and sectarian lines, have soared over the past year and continue unabated. The number of Iraqis requiring humanitarian assistance has risen sharply to more than 8.2 million people, an increase of 3 million in the past five months. More than 12,000 people were killed and 23,000 injured in 2014. The use of explosive weapons in populated areas remains a major cause of civilian deaths, injuries and displacement. The rapid expansion of armed groups, in particular Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL), has also had a devastating impact. Children have been targeted and recruited by armed groups, while thousands of women and girls have been abducted, forcibly married and subjected to sexual and gender-based violence. All parties to the conflict have been accused of perpetrating sectarian and ethnically motivated abuses and killings. Almost 3 million people, half of them children, have been internally displaced since the conflict began in Anbar Governorate in January 2014. Internally displaced persons reside in substandard shelters with limited water and sanitation. The return of internally displaced persons is hampered by the widespread use of booby traps and improvised explosive devices, damaged public infrastructure, lack of basic services and access limitations imposed by security forces. Internally displaced males are often denied entry to safer governorates. Iraq also continues to host some 248,000 refugees from the Syrian Arab Republic. Humanitarian access remains a key challenge, with ongoing violence and insecurity affecting humanitarian operations, particularly for the 2.3 million Iraqis in need of humanitarian assistance who live in areas outside government control in northern and western Iraq, including areas under ISIL control. Across the country, nearly 7 million people, or 20 per cent of the population, are unable to gain access to essential health, water and sanitation services.

Libya

15. The humanitarian situation has deteriorated dramatically since fighting intensified in mid-2014. The widespread use of explosive weapons in populated areas has taken a heavy toll on civilians, causing death, injury, displacement and the destruction of homes and essential infrastructure, while also leaving dangerous explosive remnants of war. Fighting between armed groups has been marked by extensive violations of international law, including unlawful killings, arbitrary executions, torture, enforced disappearances, abductions and forced displacement. Violent confrontations between tribal groups in the south of the country continued. The conflict has had a disproportionate impact on children. Schools have been damaged by shelling and used as bases for launching attacks. There are about 400,000 internally displaced persons, many of whom have been repeatedly displaced as a result of the widening conflict. The situation of migrants, refugees and asylum seekers, already of serious concern before the escalation in fighting, has deteriorated further. Humanitarian access is severely limited in several areas owing to insecurity and fears of violent extremism, reducing the possibility of assessing needs and providing protection and assistance.

Mali

16. Renewed conflict in northern Mali in May 2014 has led to heightened violence, intercommunal tensions and displacement. Clashes between parties to the conflict and the use of mines and improvised explosive devices in the northern and, more recently, central regions of Mali have resulted in civilian casualties. The recruitment and use of children by armed groups continues, and arbitrary arrest and detention and the ill-treatment of detainees remain a concern. As at 31 May 2015, there were more than 100,000 internally displaced persons in Mali and 137,500 Malian refugees in neighbouring countries. In conjunction with the Government, the United Nations has developed a national strategy on durable solutions for internally displaced persons, returnees and repatriated refugees, but the Government has yet to formally endorse it. The lack of basic services in many areas of origin poses a challenge for the return of internally displaced persons. Humanitarian operations have been hampered in a number of areas as insecurity and violence triggered the temporary relocation of humanitarian workers and the suspension of their operations.

Myanmar

17. Renewed clashes in Kachin and northern Shan States triggered further displacement and the breakdown of community structures, heightening the risk of sexual and gender-based violence. In Rakhine State, more than 416,000 people remain in need of humanitarian assistance following intercommunal violence between Buddhists and Rohingya Muslims in June and October 2012. In Kachin and northern Shan, concerns have been raised about the parties' failure to distinguish between civilians and combatants during hostilities, as well as the continuing recruitment and use of children. Almost four years since the outbreak of the conflict, approximately 100,000 people remain displaced in Kachin and northern Shan. In Rakhine, there are 140,000 internally displaced persons in camps, the majority of whom are Rohingya who remain segregated from the rest of the population, with limited freedom of movement. They represent only a portion of the more than 1 million Rohingya who remain stateless as a result of the country's 1982 Citizenship Law denying them equal access to citizenship, and marginalized by decades of discrimination and persecution, which have prompted thousands to flee on perilous boat journeys. Greater efforts are required to decongest the camps and find sustainable solutions for the displaced, as well as address the root causes of the intercommunal tension and violence. Humanitarian access continues to pose a serious challenge. Relief operations have been undermined by insecurity in Kachin and northern Shan, resulting in a lack of access to areas beyond government control. The environment for humanitarian workers in Rakhine remains deeply hostile. In March 2014, the premises of the United Nations and other humanitarian organizations were attacked, forcing the relocation of 300 humanitarian workers.

Nigeria

18. North-east Nigeria witnessed a significant increase in violence during the reporting period, in particular the first few months of 2015, instilling fear in the civilian population and triggering extensive displacement. An estimated 5,000 civilians have been killed since January 2014. In addition, at least 2,000 women and girls have been abducted by Boko Haram during that period, and many have been forced into sexual slavery or combat. Boko Haram has recruited and used children, including as suicide bombers and human shields. In January 2015, in the run-up to

the national elections, Boko Haram attacks on communities in the three most affected states (Borno, Yobe and Adamawa) occurred almost daily, including through the use of explosive weapons in populated areas, causing civilian deaths, injuries and displacement. In April 2015, the Nigerian army freed more than 700 women and children, and a multinational counter-insurgency effort is understood to have made significant progress against Boko Haram in April and May 2015. Nevertheless, counter-insurgency efforts by the national security forces, armed militias and the security forces of neighbouring countries are also linked to reports of very serious human rights violations allegedly involving a high number of victims. As at 30 April 2015, an estimated 1.5 million people were internally displaced. Some 90 per cent of internally displaced persons live in host communities, generally in desperate conditions, with little or no access to humanitarian assistance. Others reside in poorly equipped camps, collective centres and informal sites. A further 210,000 people have fled to neighbouring states. The Government has stated its intention to support the return of internally displaced persons and refugees. However, insecurity and the presence of unexploded ordnance in return areas pose serious challenges. Humanitarian access remains challenging in some parts of the country, in particular the north-east, owing to high levels of insecurity.

Occupied Palestinian territory

19. Hostilities in Gaza in 2014 resulted in the highest civilian death toll since 1967, as well as extensive civilian property damage and displacement. More than 1,500 Palestinian civilians were killed, including more than 500 children, and 11,000 were injured during hostilities in Gaza in July and August 2014. There was also extensive damage to homes and civilian infrastructure, including schools and hospitals. Explosive weapons were widely used in populated areas, and explosive remnants of war remain widely dispersed across Gaza. The hostilities also had a serious impact on Israeli civilians owing to indiscriminate rocket and mortar fire from armed groups in Gaza, which killed five Israeli civilians and caused displacement in southern Israel. In addition, Palestinian and Israeli fatalities occurred in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, largely as a result of confrontations between Palestinian demonstrators and Israeli forces. Those incidents highlighted long-standing concerns over the use of live ammunition for crowd control. Almost 500,000 Palestinians were internally displaced at the height of the hostilities in Gaza, and some 100,000 remain displaced. The continued demolition of Palestinian homes and the forced displacement of Palestinian civilians, many of whom are registered refugees, in relation to the construction of illegal settlements in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, remain a serious concern. Despite the recent easing, prevailing restrictions of movement into Gaza impede access to services and resources, undermine livelihoods and reconstruction, compound the fragmentation of the occupied Palestinian territory and hinder humanitarian assistance. Israel must allow and facilitate rapid and unimpeded humanitarian access to and from Gaza and the West Bank to ensure that civilians' basic needs are met.

Pakistan

20. Military operations continued in the Federally Administered Tribal Areas. While military operations continued throughout the reporting period, they appear to involve better advance planning to limit the effect on civilians. On 16 December

2014, nine gunmen stormed the Army Public School in Peshawar, killing 145 people, including 132 schoolchildren, and injuring at least 133 others. Approximately 1.6 million people remain displaced in Pakistan, including 700,000 who were displaced in 2014 alone, largely as a result of the conflict in the Federally Administered Tribal Areas. An additional 39,000 families fled to Afghanistan in 2014. At the end of 2014, the Government announced its intention to return all displaced persons over a two-year period in a phased and supported manner. Humanitarian access to return areas of internally displaced persons is critical in order to plan for, support and monitor returns. Yet bureaucratic delays continue to affect humanitarian organizations' access to people in need.

Somalia

21. The humanitarian crisis in Somalia remains among the largest and most complex in the world. High levels of insecurity prevail in most districts of southern and central Somalia, with an estimated 2,170 violent incidents reported during the first nine months of 2014. In Mogadishu, Al-Shabaab has continued to use asymmetric combat techniques, including attacks targeting government institutions, politicians and journalists using improvised explosive devices. More than 1 million internally displaced persons continue to face a range of protection challenges, including forced evictions, discrimination and sexual violence. Some 43,000 internally displaced persons have been evicted from settlements in Mogadishu since the beginning of 2015, forcing many to move to areas with poor living conditions and limited services and security. All parties to the conflict have deliberately restricted humanitarian access, including through road access limitations and administrative restrictions, in particular in southern and central Somalia. Attacks on humanitarian actors continued, with 75 incidents against aid workers, including 10 deaths and 22 abductions, during the first nine months of 2014. During the past three months alone, 7 aid workers were killed, 11 were injured and 20 were arrested and detained. In April 2015, four United Nations humanitarian workers were killed in an attack by Al-Shabaab in Garowe (Puntland), previously considered one of the most permissive security environments for international assistance in the country.

South Sudan

22. It has been 18 months since the start of the conflict that has devastated South Sudan. Both parties to the conflict are accused of targeting civilians, including through killings, arbitrary detention, abductions, disappearances, sexual violence and attacks on civilian objects, such as houses of worship, schools and hospitals. Both parties are reported to have used sexual violence as part of military tactics. An estimated 184 health facilities have been destroyed or occupied or no longer function. Access to education has been disrupted, with some 400,000 children dropping out of school since December 2013, and 70 per cent of schools in conflict-affected areas have closed. Several thousand children may have been recruited and used by armed forces and groups since 2014. In this context, I welcome the recent release by the South Sudan Democratic Army's Cobra Faction of more than 1,700 child soldiers. The United Nations Mission in South Sudan continues to provide physical protection to some 118,000 internally displaced persons on its bases, while elsewhere more than 1.5 million people are displaced internally and more than 540,000 have fled to other countries. Concerns persist about camp

militarization and the infiltration of armed elements in refugee camp settings. Violence against humanitarian workers and restrictions by both parties on road and air movement continue to undermine humanitarian access. At least 13 humanitarian workers have been killed since the conflict began.

Sudan

23. Continued fighting in the Darfur region has involved widespread violations of international humanitarian law and human rights. Clashes in Darfur have seen deliberate or indiscriminate attacks on civilians perceived to be aligned with armed opposition groups and sporadic attacks on those perceived to be aligned with the Government. There were continued reports of sexual violence in Darfur, although the United Nations has had difficulty in gaining access in order to investigate those and other alleged human rights violations. Attacks on civilians, including the intensification of aerial bombardment, were also reported in South Kordofan and Blue Nile. In 2014, an estimated 430,000 people fled intercommunal conflict and Operation Decisive Summer, launched by government forces. This brought the total number of internally displaced persons to more than 2.5 million, the majority in camp settings. At least 65,000 new internally displaced persons were verified in Darfur in the first five months of 2015 alone. Elsewhere, military operations in South Kordofan and Blue Nile reportedly displaced some 140,000 people in 2014. Although most areas hosting people in need of assistance could be reached, in many cases access was partial and involved delays and restrictions. Cross-line humanitarian access to areas of active conflict and areas held by armed opposition forces remained cut off.

Syrian Arab Republic

24. The Syrian Arab Republic has entered its fifth year of conflict, with violence and brutality continuing unabated and with total impunity for all parties to the conflict. An estimated 12.2 million people now require humanitarian assistance, an increase of almost 3 million people in the past year. More than 220,000 people have been killed and more than 1 million injured since March 2011. Civilians throughout the country have been subjected to direct or indiscriminate attacks, including the widespread use of barrel bombs and other explosive weapons in populated areas. Chemical weapons attacks have also been reported. Hospitals, schools, places of worship and other civilian objects have been damaged, destroyed or occupied by combatants. Essential services have been cut off, depriving civilians of water and electricity. Reports continue of summary and extrajudicial executions, enforced disappearances, arbitrary detention, kidnappings, sexual violence and forced recruitment by parties to the conflict. More than half of the Syrian population have been forced from their homes, with 7.6 million internally displaced persons and almost 4 million refugees in neighbouring countries. Humanitarian access continues to be constrained by fighting and insecurity, as well as deliberate obstruction of life-saving aid, despite three Security Council resolutions emphasizing the obligations of the parties under international humanitarian law and demanding full humanitarian access. Some 4.8 million people are living in hard-to-reach or besieged areas. Aid workers are frequently harassed, kidnapped or killed, and health-care facilities and personnel have also become targets.

Ukraine

25. The conflict in Ukraine has been marked by widespread disregard for the protection of civilians. Five million people now require humanitarian assistance, including shelter, food and health care. At least 6,344 people were killed between mid-April and mid-May 2015. The fighting has been characterized by the widespread use of explosive weapons, including cluster munitions, in populated areas. There were 1.3 million internally displaced persons registered in Ukraine as at 21 May 2015. In November 2014, the Government adopted a national law on ensuring the rights and freedoms of internally displaced persons, bringing some predictability to assistance efforts. Meanwhile, nearly 860,000 people have fled to neighbouring countries, one third of them children. The volatile security situation in eastern Ukraine, damaged infrastructure and bureaucratic impediments have hampered humanitarian access to people in need. Civilians remaining in conflict-affected areas have suffered extreme hardship and difficulty in gaining access to basic services due to violence, insecurity and restrictions on movement.

Yemen

26. The dramatic escalation of the conflict in Yemen in 2015 has taken a heavy toll on civilians. Prior to the latest escalation, it was estimated that 15.9 million people, or 61 per cent of the population, would require humanitarian assistance in 2015. That figure is now likely to have increased significantly. Between mid-March and mid-May 2015, about 2,000 people were killed and 8,000 people injured, roughly half of them civilians. The impact on civilian infrastructure has been devastating, with widespread air strikes and use of explosive weapons in populated areas, as well as attacks on health-care facilities, schools and other essential infrastructure. Large-scale displacement is occurring across the country owing to the intensity of the fighting. As at late May 2015, there were more than 545,000 new internally displaced persons, and more than 28,000 people have left the country over the past two months. Access conditions are severely restricted owing to ongoing hostilities and insecurity, and yet urgent humanitarian needs are increasing. Many Yemenis are now deprived of access to basic services, including medical treatment, food, water and other necessities. The Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs advocates safe, rapid and unhindered humanitarian access, including a further humanitarian pause as observed from 12 to 17 May 2015, and is working on the deconfliction arrangements necessary for a regular and predictable system under which to deliver humanitarian supplies to people in need.

III. Monitoring the five core challenges

27. The past 18 months have seen the deterioration of several protracted conflicts and the emergence of new ones, with devastating consequences for civilians. Against that backdrop, the five core protection challenges remain highly relevant.

Compliance and accountability

Respect for international humanitarian law

28. One of the most critical challenges for the protection of civilians is the prevailing disrespect for international humanitarian law on the part of States and non-State armed groups. Many parties in today's armed conflicts consistently show

complete disregard for their obligations under international humanitarian law and contempt for human life. Deliberately targeting and brutalizing civilians and attacking vital civilian infrastructure have become routine objectives of parties to conflict. Violations of international humanitarian law are accompanied by widespread impunity, which emboldens perpetrators and deprives victims of any hope of justice or redress. I encourage Member States to come together to discuss and identify ways to strengthen respect for and compliance with international humanitarian law, as a matter of urgency and priority.

Attacks against humanitarian and health-care workers and facilities

29. I remain concerned by continuing attacks against humanitarian and health-care workers and facilities. A study conducted by the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) in 2014 documented more than 1,800 incidents involving serious acts or threats of violence affecting the delivery of health care in 2012 and 2013. According to the Aid Worker Database, 270 aid workers were killed, kidnapped or seriously wounded in 2014. Ninety per cent of the victims were national staff. Such attacks have devastating consequences for civilians. I welcome the adoption by the Security Council of resolution 2175 (2014) on the protection of humanitarian and United Nations and associated personnel. In that resolution, the Council reaffirmed the legal protection afforded to such personnel, called for their full and unimpeded access to all people in need of assistance, and emphasized the responsibility of States to ensure accountability for perpetrators of attacks.

Widespread use of explosive weapons in populated areas

30. Since 2009, I have consistently highlighted the devastating humanitarian impact of the use of explosive weapons in populated areas.[1] I have called upon parties to conflict to refrain from the use of explosive weapons with wide-area effects in populated areas. I have recommended that the Security Council, whenever relevant, expressly call upon parties to conflict to refrain from the use of such weapons.

31. The reasons for doing so are abundantly clear. In Afghanistan, Libya, the occupied Palestinian territory, the Sudan, the Syrian Arab Republic, Ukraine, Yemen and elsewhere, the use of explosive weapons in populated areas is a major cause of civilian deaths, injury and displacement. According to the non-governmental organization Action on Armed Violence, 41,847 people were killed or injured by explosive weapons in 2014, of whom 78 per cent were civilians. When explosive weapons were used in populated areas, 92 per cent of the casualties were civilians.[2] While explosive weapons are not explicitly prohibited under international humanitarian law, in many cases their use in populated areas constitutes unlawful conduct because of their indiscriminate impact. Since the wide-area effects of many explosive weapons are well known, their likely impact on civilians and civilian infrastructure is foreseeable. This raises serious moral and, in some cases, legal questions.

32. Many types of explosive weapons are currently in use. They include air-dropped bombs, artillery shells, missiles and rockets, mortar bombs and improvised explosive devices. While they differ in their design, composition and method of use,

[1] S/2009/277, para. 36.

[2] Action on Armed Violence, *Explosive States: Monitoring Explosive Violence in 2014*.

such weapons share certain basic features. They generally use explosive force to create a zone of blast and fragmentation with the potential to kill or injure anyone or damage anything within that zone. In other words, such weapons have indiscriminate effects. This makes their use in populated areas, such as towns, cities, markets and camps for internally displaced persons, particularly problematic, and more so if the weapons' effects extend across a wide area.

33. Given the indiscriminate impact of explosive weapons, their use in populated areas exacts an unacceptable toll on civilians. Many civilians are killed or suffer life-changing injuries. The use of explosive weapons in populated areas also has a significant long-term humanitarian impact. Housing and essential infrastructure, such as water and electricity supply systems, are damaged or destroyed. Livelihoods are devastated as commercial property and means of production are damaged or destroyed. Access to health care is often hampered because hospitals and clinics have been damaged, destroyed or rendered inaccessible, or because health-care personnel have been killed or supplies cut off. Children's education is interrupted, either as a result of damage to facilities or direct harm or fear of harm to teaching personnel. The Syrian conflict has put 2.6 million children out of school, some for three years or more. In Gaza, 66 per cent of schools were damaged or destroyed during the hostilities in July and August 2014, including some that were sheltering internally displaced persons, resulting in further loss of life.

34. The use of explosive weapons in populated areas is a major driver of displacement as people are forced to flee owing to attacks that damage or destroy their homes or livelihoods or fear of such attacks. It also has a tremendous impact on post-conflict reconstruction requirements and costs. Explosive weapons leave explosive remnants of war, which continue to pose a serious threat to civilians, in particular children, often for decades after the conflict has ended.

35. The use of explosive weapons in populated areas, in particular those weapons with wide-area effects, raises serious concerns about respect for the fundamental principles of distinction, proportionality and precautions in international humanitarian law. Full compliance with international humanitarian law by all parties to conflict would significantly strengthen the protection of civilians from the effects of explosive weapons. In addition, the development of policy standards to curb or limit the use of explosive weapons in populated areas, in particular those weapons with wide-area effects, could significantly strengthen the protection of civilians.

36. Important precedents exist in this regard. Of particular note, the International Security Assistance Force, in Afghanistan, and the African Union Mission in Somalia instituted policy and practice that place limits on the use of certain explosive weapons in certain locations where civilians tend to be present, in order to minimize the impact of military operations on civilians. The Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs is compiling examples of such practice and will make them available to Member States and partners with a view to promoting a change in practice by parties to conflict. In October 2014, I sent a note verbale to all Member States requesting that they provide examples of relevant policy and practice. Some have responded to my request, and I encourage others to do so without delay. I also welcome the decision of Austria to convene an expert meeting later in 2015, in cooperation with the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, to begin discussing the possible scope and content of a declaration on the

humanitarian impact of explosive weapons in populated areas. I strongly encourage Member States to engage constructively in that initiative.

Humanitarian access

37. Regular and sustained humanitarian access remains a key challenge in many armed conflicts. Access is a prerequisite for effective humanitarian action. Accordingly, I have repeatedly emphasized the need to ensure systematic engagement by humanitarian organizations with non-State armed groups on access, protection and other humanitarian issues.

38. During the past 18 months, multiple constraints continued to have an impact on the ability of affected people to gain access to assistance and services, as well as humanitarian organizations' ability to reach affected people. These include active hostilities, attacks against humanitarian workers and facilities, bureaucratic restrictions and interference in the delivery of assistance. In some conflicts, the parties have deliberately obstructed the delivery of assistance in order to harm civilians. Access for humanitarian organizations is not simply a technical requirement or bureaucratic decision for Governments; the denial of access prolongs suffering and kills people.

39. I therefore reiterate that, in situations where the party to the conflict with control over a civilian population is unable or unwilling to meet the needs of that population, humanitarian organizations must be allowed to carry out impartial relief operations. The consent of affected States for relief operations may not be arbitrarily withheld. Once relief operations have been agreed to, parties must allow and facilitate rapid and unimpeded passage of relief consignments, equipment and personnel. The arbitrary denial of humanitarian access and depriving civilians of objects indispensable to their survival, including wilfully impeding relief supply and access, constitute violations of international humanitarian law, and this has increasingly been acknowledged in Security Council resolutions. There must be accountability for such acts.

Peacekeeping

40. I note the ongoing challenges that peacekeepers face in their efforts to protect civilians in armed conflict. While the situation in many conflicts remains grim, it would be far worse without the important protection that peacekeepers can provide. During the reporting period, attacks on peacekeeping personnel resulted in the death of 55 personnel. In Mali and Darfur alone, attacks on peacekeepers during that period resulted in 42 personnel killed and 99 wounded. Peacekeepers are also increasingly faced with movement restrictions in violation of status-of-forces agreements with national authorities, which can hamper their ability to perform their mandated tasks. The important and impartial role of peacekeepers in protecting civilians must be respected by all parties. I have recently received the report of the High-level Independent Panel on Peace Operations (see S/2015/446) and will make recommendations to the General Assembly in due course.

Long-term internal displacement in protracted crises

41. Internal displacement has reached record levels. At the end of 2014, more than 38 million people were internally displaced as a result of conflict and violence, while an additional 13 million had sought refuge abroad. Those figures are higher

than at any time since the Second World War. An estimated 11 million people became internally displaced in 2014 alone, or 30,000 every day. The average length of conflict-induced internal displacement is about 17 years.

42. Internally displaced persons are particularly vulnerable. They often have limited access to basic services, and many lack legal documentation and struggle to find employment or reclaim property. They are at increased risk of discrimination and exploitation, in particular women and girls. Many internally displaced persons are accommodated in camps with only the most basic facilities, but the vast majority live in host communities. The generosity of communities that support internally displaced persons for weeks, months or even years should be acknowledged.

43. National Governments have the primary responsibility to protect and assist internally displaced persons on their territory. Governments should invest in preparedness measures and develop the legal frameworks and policies necessary to address internal displacement, based on the Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement. At present, less than 40 per cent of countries have such frameworks in place. Governments should promote durable solutions, including return, local integration and settlement elsewhere in the country, from the onset of displacement crises. Instructive provisions are contained in the African Union Convention for the Protection and Assistance of Internally Displaced Persons in Africa (Kampala Convention); other regions could benefit from the development of similar frameworks. At the national level, I welcome the adoption of legislation on displacement in Somalia and Ukraine.

44. The international community has a responsibility not only to provide assistance to internally displaced persons but also to help to address their specific protection needs and the causes of their displacement. We need to strengthen the coordination and operational capacity of humanitarian organizations to support Governments and development partners in addressing the short- and long-term needs of internally displaced persons. The Security Council, at its Arria Formula meeting on the protection of internally displaced persons, held in May 2014, emphasized the importance of restoring national authority and protection, the key role of the international community and the Security Council when national protection fails, and the need for greater focus on and investment in long-term and durable solutions for internally displaced persons. I encourage Council members to consider these recommendations in relation to country-specific situations.

45. The sustainable development goals offer a unique opportunity to address protracted displacement in a systematic and effective manner. While displacement was not included in the sustainable development goals and targets, it should be reflected in the sustainable development goal indicators, disaggregated data sets and the definition of vulnerable groups. This is essential, to ensure that no one is "left behind" and to create an environment conducive to the protection of 51 million displaced people around the world. Upholding the right of those particularly vulnerable people to live in safety and dignity and offering them durable solutions are an essential part of ending poverty in all its forms everywhere and must therefore be part of the sustainable development goals framework.

46. Beyond the sustainable development goals process, we need to set ourselves an ambitious but credible target, for example collectively committing ourselves to halving the number of internally displaced persons by 2030. Rallying Member States, concerned Governments, donors, humanitarian and development actors and

international financial institutions around a common and concrete objective is a prerequisite to making progress on internal displacement. It will compel us to develop better-coordinated and more holistic approaches.

IV. Normative progress and ongoing efforts to strengthen the protection of civilians

47. Since my previous report, there have been a number of important advances that support the protection of civilians.

Compliance and accountability

48. The entry into force of the Arms Trade Treaty in 2014 is a significant step towards preventing the flow of weapons and ammunition to areas affected by conflict and violence. I call upon all States that have not yet done so to accede to and implement the Treaty without delay.

49. Since 2012, Switzerland and ICRC have conducted consultations with States parties to the 1949 Geneva Conventions to identify ways to strengthen compliance with international humanitarian law. The 32nd International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent, to be held in December 2015, presents an important opportunity for States to act on the recommendations emanating from that process.

50. In the fight against conflict-related sexual violence, my Special Representative on Sexual Violence in Conflict signed joint communiqués with the Governments of the Democratic Republic of the Congo and South Sudan, as well as a framework of cooperation with the African Union, to address conflict-related sexual violence.

51. Progress was seen in some countries, including Afghanistan, the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Myanmar, in the implementation of action plans to end and prevent the recruitment and use of children. The new Guidelines for Protecting Schools and Universities from Military Use during Armed Conflict, along with early guidance produced by my Special Representative for Children and Armed Conflict, are also important contributions to the protection of children.

52. Various steps have been taken under the Human Rights Up Front initiative, which I launched in 2013, to strengthen the ability of the United Nations to prevent and respond to serious violations of international humanitarian and human rights law. Mechanisms for early warning and the coordination of United Nations response have been strengthened, as have efforts to improve collective information sharing and analysis within and across the United Nations with regard to such violations. The statement by the principals of the Inter-Agency Standing Committee on the centrality of protection in humanitarian action, issued in December 2013, outlined measures to strengthen the protection of all persons affected and at risk within a humanitarian response.

53. The successful implementation over the past two years of the human rights due diligence policy on United Nations support to non-United Nations security forces by peace operations constitutes another effective way to reduce the risk of national security forces committing violations of international human rights or humanitarian law.

54. The utility of casualty recording was again highlighted in a study by the Oxford Research Group in 2014, which found that casualty recording by UNAMA in Afghanistan had made possible advocacy to engage parties to the conflict on their behaviour and led to a decrease in civilian casualties resulting from their operations.

55. The International Criminal Court secured its second conviction on 7 March 2014, finding Germain Katanga guilty of five counts of war crimes and crimes against humanity. In addition, in December 2014, the Court's Appeals Chamber upheld the conviction and sentence of Thomas Lubanga Dyilo. These are important verdicts for the victims of those horrific crimes against civilians, international justice and the fight against impunity.

Humanitarian access

56. Further to a request contained in my previous report, the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs and Oxford University have led a series of consultations with a range of experts and organizations to develop detailed guidance on the legal framework regulating humanitarian assistance, with particular focus on the arbitrary withholding of consent to relief operations. The guidance will be released in July 2015 and will address such issues as whose consent is required for cross-border relief operations; what amounts to arbitrary withholding of consent; and how the obligation to allow and facilitate relief operations can be implemented. It is hoped that the guidance will inform policies and advocacy strategies for improving humanitarian access to conflict-affected populations.

Peacekeeping

57. The Department of Peacekeeping Operations and the Department of Field Support have published the first United Nations policy on the protection of civilians in United Nations peacekeeping, along with associated guidelines for military components. This constitutes an important development in our efforts to institutionalize how civilian, police and military peacekeepers implement protection of civilians mandates in coordination with humanitarian and human rights actors and in support of national authorities.

V. Recommendations

58. Recalling the numerous recommendations in my previous reports aimed at strengthening the protection of civilians, I emphasize the importance of the following measures.

Strengthening respect for international law

59. To strengthen compliance with international law and ensure accountability for violations, the Security Council should:

(a) Systematically remind parties to conflict of their obligations under international law, in particular in the conduct of hostilities, and call upon the parties to fully comply with their obligations;

(b) Systematically condemn violations of international humanitarian, human rights and refugee law, including attacks against humanitarian and health-care

personnel and facilities, and consider referring such instances to the International Criminal Court;

(c) Systematically request reports on violations of international humanitarian and human rights law and, where concerns exist regarding serious violations, consider mandating commissions of inquiry or referring situations to the International Criminal Court;

(d) Consider applying targeted measures against parties and individuals who routinely violate their obligations to protect civilians;

(e) Encourage Member States to develop concrete mechanisms to improve respect for international law, such as regular meetings on compliance and a central register for monitoring and recording violations of international law.

60. Member States should:

(a) Adopt national legislation for the prosecution of persons suspected of genocide, crimes against humanity, war crimes and other serious violations of international humanitarian and human rights law;

(b) Search for and prosecute or extradite persons suspected of grave breaches of international humanitarian law or serious violations of human rights law;

(c) Ratify the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court without delay;

(d) Cooperate fully with the International Criminal Court and similar mechanisms.

Humanitarian access

61. The Security Council should systematically remind parties to conflict of their obligation to allow and facilitate rapid and unimpeded humanitarian access. In addition, the Council should condemn the arbitrary denial of humanitarian access and depriving civilians of objects indispensable to their survival, including wilfully impeding relief supply and access, and should emphasize that such acts constitute violations of international humanitarian law.

62. The Emergency Relief Coordinator and humanitarian organizations should systematically engage with relevant non-State parties to conflict on humanitarian issues with the objective of improving humanitarian access, ensuring the delivery of emergency assistance and strengthening the protection of civilians in conflict areas. Such engagement, for exclusively humanitarian purposes, does not entail the recognition of the political or military aspirations of non-State armed groups.

Use of explosive weapons in populated areas

63. Parties to conflict should refrain from the use of explosive weapons with wide-area effects in populated areas. In addition, Member States should consider making a commitment to this effect.

64. Member States should improve the exchange of information and lessons learned on the use and impact of explosive weapons with wide-area effects in populated areas. In particular, as called for in my note verbale of October 2014, Member States should support the ongoing efforts of the Office for the Coordination

of Humanitarian Affairs to collect examples of good practice and develop guidance to enhance the protection of civilians and reduce the humanitarian impact of explosive weapons in populated areas.

65. Member States, with the support of the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs and relevant organizations, should develop targets and indicators to monitor progress in reducing the humanitarian impact of explosive weapons in populated areas.

Civilian casualty tracking and recording

66. In recognition of the proven utility of civilian casualty tracking as a means of informing military strategy to reduce harm to civilians, parties to conflict, including in the context of multinational operations and United Nations peacekeeping missions involved in offensive operations, should establish and implement such mechanisms.

67. United Nations actors should work together to establish a common United Nations system to systematically record civilian casualties as part of broader efforts to monitor and report on violations of international humanitarian and human rights law, drawing on good practice and expertise from within the United Nations, Member States and civil society.

Displacement

68. Member States should ensure that the sustainable development goals framework adequately addresses the long-term needs of the forcibly displaced, including in relevant definitions, indicators and disaggregated data sets. Beyond that framework, I encourage the development of ambitious but credible targets and national monitoring mechanisms aimed at significantly reducing (e.g. by half) the number of forcibly displaced persons by 2030.

69. States members of the African Union should ratify and implement the Kampala Convention without delay. In addition, Member States should promote the development of similar instruments in other regions to protect and address the specific needs of internally displaced persons. The objective should be to ensure that by 2030 at least 50 per cent of States have adopted and implemented regional and national legal and policy frameworks on internal displacement.

Protection of civilians before the Security Council

70. Given the extreme challenges and levels of violence that civilians are facing in conflict settings around the world, I recommend that:

(a) My report on the protection of civilians in armed conflict be submitted on an annual basis (rather than every 18 months);

(b) The Council resume its practice of holding biannual open debates on the protection of civilians, in June and December;

(c) The Expert Group on the Protection of Civilians be used systematically to monitor protection trends in a greater number of situations of concern, including in the absence of peace operations, and to bring to the attention of Council members the most pressing protection challenges facing civilians and possible opportunities to address those challenges.

United Nations S/2015/454

Security Council

Distr.: General
19 June 2015

Original: English

Letter dated 18 June 2015 from the Permanent Representatives of Belgium, Luxembourg and the Netherlands to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

We have the honour to write to you on behalf of Albania, Andorra, Australia, Austria, Bahrain, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Botswana, Bulgaria, Cabo Verde, Canada, the Central African Republic, Costa Rica, Croatia, Cyprus, the Czech Republic, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Honduras, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Jordan, Kuwait, Latvia, Libya, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malaysia, Malta, Micronesia (Federated States of), Monaco, Montenegro, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Paraguay, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, the Republic of Korea, the Republic of Moldova, Romania, San Marino, Saudi Arabia, Serbia, Seychelles, Slovakia, Slovenia, Somalia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Turkey, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, the United States of America, Uruguay and Yemen.

We express our outrage regarding the continued bloodshed and violence against civilians in Syria caused, in particular, by the systematic use of barrel bombs and stress the urgent need for the full implementation of Security Council resolutions 2118 (2013), 2139 (2014), 2165 (2014), 2191 (2014) and 2209 (2015) and the importance of full compliance with international humanitarian law.

May 2015 was reportedly the deadliest month of the Syrian crisis to date. In recent weeks, helicopters of the Syrian air force repeatedly bombarded heavily populated areas in and around Aleppo, leaving hundreds of civilians dead and dozens of others wounded, with many victims blown to pieces or burned beyond recognition. Those attacks, which the international community condemned, were among the most brutal perpetrated since the start of the Syrian crisis.

Tragically, those barrel bomb attacks in Aleppo were the latest in a long line of the grisly and horrific use of aerial weapons, including barrel bombs, that have been launched by the Syrian air force on crowded urban areas, such as markets and bakery queues, hospitals and medical facilities, schools and places of worship, transportation hubs and residential buildings throughout the course of the Syrian crisis, leaving thousands dead. The investigations of the Independent International Commission of Inquiry on the Syrian Arab Republic established by the Human Rights Council reinforce the finding that the main cause of civilian casualties, mass displacement and destruction is the deliberate targeting of civilians, indiscriminate attacks, attacks on civilians and protected objects, and the punitive imposition of sieges and blockades.

Please recycle

On 8 June, the Special Envoy for Syria, Staffan de Mistura, reiterated his condemnation of the use of barrel bombs. On 30 May, he had qualified the situation as "totally unacceptable" and added that all evidence showed that the overwhelming majority of the civilian victims in the Syrian conflict had been caused by the use of such indiscriminate aerial weapons by the Syrian air force. He also stressed that the protection of civilians during armed conflicts was a cornerstone of international humanitarian law.

The indiscriminate use of weapons, including barrel bombs, is prohibited under international humanitarian law. We recall in that regard Security Council resolution 2139 (2014), in which the Council demanded that all parties immediately cease all attacks against civilians, as well as the indiscriminate employment of weapons in populated areas, including shelling and aerial bombardment, such as the use of barrel bombs.

The Syrian authorities must cease indiscriminate aerial attacks. On behalf of our respective Governments, we call upon the Security Council to advance its efforts to ensure implementation of its existing resolutions on Syria and to prevent the future use by the Syrian air force of any such aerial bombardment, including its use of barrel bombs. We also urge that the Council reinforce efforts to ensure that humanitarian assistance reaches all those in need throughout Syria. We saw through the adoption of resolutions 2118 (2013), 2139 (2014) and 2165 (2014) what can be done when the Council acts together and speaks with one voice.

We also recall that violations and abuses committed in Syria may amount to war crimes and crimes against humanity. We are firmly of the view that the international community must take steps to ensure justice for the victims of the Syrian crisis by bringing to justice, without exceptions, all alleged perpetrators of crimes.

We emphasize that the humanitarian situation will continue to deteriorate in the absence of a political solution and urge all parties to work towards the comprehensive implementation of the Geneva Communiqué of 30 June 2012 leading to a genuine political transition that meets the legitimate aspirations of the Syrian people and enables them independently and democratically to determine their own future. We fully support the efforts of the Special Envoy for Syria in this regard.

We would appreciate it if the present letter could be circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Bénédicte **Frankinet**
Permanent Representative of Belgium to the United Nations

(*Signed*) Sylvie **Lucas**
Permanent Representative of Luxembourg to the United Nations

(*Signed*) Karel **van Oosterom**
Permanent Representative
of the Kingdom of the Netherlands to the United Nations

United Nations S/2015/455

Security Council

Distr.: General
18 June 2015

Original: English

Letter dated 18 June 2015 from the Secretary-General addressed to the President of the Security Council

I have the honour to refer to Security Council resolution 2216 (2015), adopted on 14 April 2015, by which the Council decided to impose a targeted arms embargo on designated individuals and increase the size of the Panel of Experts on Yemen from four to five members, and requested me to take the necessary administrative measures.

Accordingly, I wish to inform you that, after consulting with the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 2140 (2014),

I have appointed the following expert:

Nicolás Dapena Fernández, arms (Argentina)

I should be grateful if you would bring this matter to the attention of the members of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) **BAN** Ki-moon

15-10082 (E) 190615

Please recycle

United Nations A/69/944–S/2015/456

General Assembly
Security Council

Distr.: General
18 June 2015

Original: English

General Assembly
Sixty-ninth session
Agenda item 32
Prevention of armed conflict

Security Council
Seventieth year

Letter dated 17 June 2015 from the Permanent Representative of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to transmit herewith a statement by the Government of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea issued on 15 June 2015 on the occasion of the fifteenth anniversary of the first North-South Summit and the publication of the June 15 Joint Declaration (see annex).

I should be grateful if you would have the present letter and its annex circulated as a document of the sixty-ninth session of the General Assembly, under agenda item 32, and of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) **Ja** Song Nam
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

15-10073 (E) 240615

Please recycle

Annex to the letter dated 17 June 2015 from the Permanent Representative of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Statement by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to bring about landmark turn in improving inter-Korean relations

Pyongyang, 15 June (KCNA) — On Monday, 15 June 2015, the Government of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) released a statement to mark the fifteenth anniversary of the North-South Summit, the first of its kind in the history of national division, and the publication of the June 15 Joint Declaration.

Leader Kim Jong Il provided for the Pyongyang summit and adopted the June 15 Joint Declaration, true to the noble intention of President Kim Il Sung who dedicated his life to the cause of national reunification. It was an historic event, which brought about a turning point in improving north-south relations and achieving national reunification, the statement noted, and continued:

The publication of the June 15 Joint Declaration made it possible for the north and the south of Korea to defuse the distrust and confrontation which had lasted for more than half of a century and to greet a new era advancing towards reconciliation, unity and reunification through the concerted efforts of Koreans.

Had north-south relations made steady advances along the way indicated by the June 15 Joint Declaration, eye-opening changes and successes would have been achieved in the drive for national reunification, the desire of the Korean nation.

However, north-south relations were brought back to the era of confrontation of the past, owing to the despicable moves of the Lee Myung Bak conservative group, which totally denied the north-south joint declarations, and that catastrophe has currently reached a grave phase.

Upon authorization, the DPRK Government in its statement clarified the following stand, prompted by the will to save north-south relations from a serious crisis and to bring about a landmark turn in national reconciliation and unity.

1. It is necessary to have a firm stand to improve north-south relations and solve the reunification issue independently through the concerted efforts of the Korean nation.

It is the basic spirit of the June 15 Joint Declaration to solve issues related to inter-Korean relations and the matter of the country's reunification independently through the concerted efforts of the Korean nation responsible for it.

The north and the south should settle all issues arising with regard to improving inter-Korean relations and achieving reunification in line with the interests and desire of the nation with strong national self-respect.

The south Korean authorities should stop soliciting "international cooperation" to hurt their fellow countrymen in the north by relying on outside forces and not leaving the national issue to their tender mercy.

They should come out for improving inter-Korean relations and solving the reunification issue through the concerted efforts of Koreans.

2. The south Korean authorities should not seek the "unification of social systems", inciting distrust and confrontation between the north and the south.

Since differing ideologies and social systems have existed in the north and the south for the past seven decades, any attempt to achieve reunification under one social system would bring nothing but confrontation and war.

The north and the south recognized the common points in the north-proposed federation of lower stage and the south-proposed confederation, in the June 15 Joint Declaration, and agreed to work for reunification in that direction.

The south Korean authorities should clearly understand that the coexistence and co-prosperity of the north and the south, irrespective of ideology and social systems, is the most reasonable and realistic way for national reunification.

3. The south Korean authorities should stop north-targeted war exercises in collusion with the U.S.

The south Korean authorities staged ceaseless war rehearsals against the north, such as Key Resolve and Foal Eagle joint military exercises in league with the U.S., chilling the desire of all Koreans for reunification and scuppering the golden chances for improving inter-Korean relations.

Inter-Korean relations can never improve, nor can the Korean peninsula get rid of the danger of a nuclear war, as long as those military threats and provocations persist.

The south Korean authorities should halt such dangerous acts as leaving the life and safety of Koreans exposed to the war shambles of aggressors as a shock brigade in carrying out the U.S. strategy for dominating the Asia-Pacific region.

There is no need for them to feel any uneasiness and fear of the DPRK's self-defensive deterrence for protecting the dignity, stability and peace of the nation, but they should discontinue acts of treachery against it.

They should put a definite end to all military drills with the U.S. and come out for defending peace and stability on the Korean peninsula through the concerted efforts of the Korean nation.

4. It is necessary to create a climate for mending north-south relations.

Slandering each other is a venomous practice fostering distrust and hatred towards fellow countrymen and such a practice, if unchecked, may lead to physical conflict and war.

The south Korean authorities should not just pay lip service to "confidence-building" and "improvement of relations" but stop all provocations rattling the nerves of the DPRK and slandering it.

The south Korean authorities should boldly remove the legal and institutional barriers blocking north-south contact, visits, exchange and cooperation and create an environment favourable to repairing relations.

5. The north and the south should take practical measures to implement the historic north-south joint declarations.

The June 15 Joint Declaration and the October 4 Declaration are valuable agreements made at the summits of the north and the south for the improvement of

relations and co-prosperity, and solemn promises were made by the north and the south authorities to the nation.

If the north-south joint declarations should be denied and their implementation suspended because of regime changes, no issue can be settled between the north and the south in the future.

The south Korean authorities should not just pay lip service to respect for the June 15 Joint Declaration and the October 4 Declaration but prove it in practice.

The south Korean authorities should bear in mind that they are now standing at a crossroads; either they join hands with the north to repair inter-Korean relations or they will meet the same miserable end as did their predecessors while standing in confrontation with the north to the last.

Consistent is the stand of the DPRK to pave a wide avenue to independent reunification by bringing about a great turn in north-south relations.

United Nations A/69/928–S/2015/457

General Assembly
Security Council

Distr.: General
19 June 2015

Original: English

General Assembly
Sixty-ninth session
Agenda items 66, 68, 82 and 129

Elimination of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance

Promotion and protection of human rights

The rule of law at the national and international levels

Seventieth anniversary of the end of the Second World War

Security Council
Seventieth year

Identical letters dated 18 June 2015 from the Secretary-General addressed to the President of the General Assembly and the President of the Security Council

I have the honour to transmit herewith a letter dated 9 June 2015, which I received from Thomas Mayr-Harting, Head of the Delegation of the European Union to the United Nations, and a joint response of the European Union to the report entitled "Neo-Nazism: a dangerous threat to human rights, democracy and the rule of law", issued by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation (see annex).

I should be grateful if you would bring the present letter and its annex to the attention of Member States and observer missions.

(*Signed*) **BAN** Ki-moon

15-10140 (E) 220615

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Annex

At the end of April 2015, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation issued a report entitled "Neo-Nazism: a dangerous threat to human rights, democracy and the rule of law", which has been circulated as a document of the United Nations at the request of its Permanent Representative.

The European Union has already repeatedly stated its position on the fight against racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance, including neo-Nazism, most recently in its comprehensive explanation of the vote (see A/69/486 and A/C.3/69/SR.50) delivered before the adoption on 21 November 2014 of resolution 69/160 on combating glorification of Nazism, neo-Nazism and other practices that contribute to fuelling contemporary forms of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance, in which the European Union stressed that that fight should not be misused for political purposes.

In addition, I have the honour to convey to you the attached joint response of the European Union, specifically addressing the above-mentioned report from the Russian Federation (see enclosure).

I kindly request that the present letter and its enclosure be circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda items 66, 68, 82 and 129, and of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Thomas **Mayr-Harting**
Ambassador

Enclosure

European Union joint response to the report entitled "Neo-Nazism: a dangerous threat to human rights, democracy and the rule of law", issued by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation

We are aware that the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation issued a report entitled "Neo-Nazism: a dangerous threat to human rights, democracy and the rule of law" at the end of April 2015 and that the Russian Federation has requested that the report be circulated as a document of the United Nations.

The report contains factual inaccuracies and selective information on the situation in the European Union and its member States. The report is also geographically incomplete. A chapter on the situation in the Russian Federation, for example, is missing.

The European Union regrets that the Russian Federation tries to establish parallels between current and past political developments in the context of the ongoing crises.

The European Union is committed to the global fight against racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance, including anti-Semitism and neo-Nazism. The European Union and its member States continue to take firm steps to address this at home, including in the context of the framework decision on combating certain forms and expressions of racism and xenophobia by means of criminal law. Their condemnation and combat must be a common and consensual priority for the entire international community. The European Union calls on all States Members of the United Nations to remain united in efforts to fight racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance, including anti-Semitism and neo-Nazism, to tackle hate crimes and hate-speech decisively and to cooperate in this regard.

United Nations S/2015/458

Security Council

Distr.: General
19 June 2015

Original: English

Letter dated 18 June 2015 from the Permanent Representative of Burundi to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

I have the honour to submit to you the statement by the Government of Burundi regarding the Summit of Heads of State and Government of the African Union held in Johannesburg, South Africa, on 13 June 2015 (see annex).

I kindly request that the present letter and its annex be circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Albert **Shingiro**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

15-10143 (E) 230615 240615

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Annex to the letter dated 18 June 2015 from the Permanent Representative of Burundi to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

[Original: French]

Communiqué of the Government of Burundi following the Summit of Heads of State and Government of the African Union held in Johannesburg on 13 June 2015

The Government of the Republic of Burundi has taken note of communiqué PSC/PR/COMM.2 (DXV) of the Peace and Security Council of the African Union, issued following the meeting held on 13 June 2015 in Johannesburg, South Africa, and, without prejudice to the upcoming consultations with the African Union Commission, has the honour to inform the nation and the international community of the following:

Electoral schedule

As recommended at the Summit of Heads of State of the East African Community held on 31 May 2015, and with a view to organizing free, calm, inclusive, credible and transparent elections in 2015, the Government has already postponed the elections to the latest possible dates allowed under the Constitution, in order to prevent the chaos that would arise from an institutional vacuum.

The new, technically and constitutionally acceptable schedule is as follows:

(a) Election of local councillors and deputies: 29 June 2015;

(b) Election of the President: 15 July 2015;

(c) Election of senators: 24 July 2015.

Even though the Government agrees with the principle of a consensus on the electoral schedule, that schedule could not extend beyond the limits allowed under the Constitution; otherwise, the authority responsible for calling elections would be guilty of high treason, under the Constitution.

Dialogue and easing of tensions during the electoral period

Regarding dialogue and the measures to be taken to ease tensions during the electoral period, it should be recalled that the Government has already proven its good faith by undertaking to suspend the execution of arrest warrants against the organizers of violent demonstrations. Because other parties also have a role to play in easing tensions, the Government has been waiting, to no avail, for the organizers to formally call for an end to the violent demonstrations, as requested at the Summit.

Disarming of armed civilians

Regarding the disarming of armed youth groups affiliated with political parties, the Government once again announces that the National Disarming Commission has been instructed to accelerate the pace of recovering all weapons held illegally by the population. It should be recalled that to date, over 100,000

firearms have been recovered by law enforcement officers as part of the disarming programme.

To achieve even more satisfactory results, however, the Government is appealing, through the joint security committees, to all the relevant partners — political parties, without exception, civil society organizations, the administration as a whole and the local population — to cooperate in this disarming campaign, in order to help in organizing excellent elections.

Any regional or international support in the form of observers recommended by the African Union would be welcome to witness this existing reality.

Still with a view to organizing safe elections, the Government has made a commitment to provide protection for political leaders before, during and after the elections, and remains at their disposal for the technical arrangements needed to fulfil that commitment. Once the polling stations have been announced, security units will be deployed to provide the safest environment possible.

Return of refugees

The Government welcomes the gradual and satisfactory return of refugees. More than 35,000 of the approximately 70,000 refugees who are reported to have fled owing to recent rumours have already returned, including 15,000 from the United Republic of Tanzania, who were recently welcomed by the Head of State in Makamba, in the south of the country, and others from Rwanda, in the northern provinces of Kirundo and Muyinga.

As it has already done, the Government plans to send more missions to countries hosting refugees to discuss their voluntary return. In this regard, the Government reiterates its request to countries and organizations hosting refugees to no longer impede their return, and to help raise the awareness of those who wish to return.

Finally, the Government of the Republic of Burundi stands ready to cooperate with any experts sent by its partners to ensure that the elections run smoothly.

Bujumbura, 16 June 2015

Philippe **Nzobonariba**
Secretary-General and Spokesperson of the Government

United Nations S/2015/459

Security Council

Distr.: General
19 June 2015

Original: English

Letter dated 18 June 2015 from the representatives of Austria, Belgium, Costa Rica, Denmark, Finland, Germany, Liechtenstein, Netherlands, Norway, Sweden and Switzerland to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

We, the undersigned representatives of Austria, Belgium, Costa Rica, Denmark, Finland, Germany, Liechtenstein, the Netherlands, Norway, Sweden and Switzerland (the informal group of like-minded States on targeted sanctions) have been strongly engaged in the issues of Security Council sanctions and due process. We would like to express our concern regarding the short-term risk of a gap in the occupation of the Office of the Ombudsperson in the Al-Qaida sanctions regime. We furthermore call for the improvement of the institutional independence of the Office. We look forward to continuing and deepening the dialogue on these important matters with all members of the Council.

Our group requested to speak on the basis of rule 37 of the provisional rules of procedure of the Security Council at the briefing of the subsidiary bodies of the Council on 16 June 2015. However, this request was not granted, contrary to previous occasions. We would thus be grateful if you could have the present letter and its annex, containing our group's statement, circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Martin **Sajdik**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative of Austria to the United Nations

(*Signed*) Bénédicte **Frankinet**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative of Belgium to the United Nations

(*Signed*) Juan Carlos **Mendoza-García**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative of Costa Rica to the United Nations

(*Signed*) Ib **Petersen**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative of Denmark to the United Nations

(*Signed*) Kai **Sauer**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative of Finland to the United Nations

15-10136 (E) 240615

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(*Signed*) Harald **Braun**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative of Germany to the United Nations

(*Signed*) Christian **Wenaweser**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative of Liechtenstein to the United Nations

(*Signed*) Peter **van der Vliet**
Chargé d'affaires a.i.
Deputy Permanent Representative of the
Kingdom of the Netherlands to the United Nations

(*Signed*) Geir O. **Pedersen**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative of Norway to the United Nations

(*Signed*) Olof **Skoog**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative of Sweden to the United Nations

(*Signed*) Paul **Seger**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative of Switzerland to the United Nations

Annex to the letter dated 18 June 2015 from the representatives of Austria, Belgium, Costa Rica, Denmark, Finland, Germany, Liechtenstein, Netherlands, Norway, Sweden and Switzerland to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

Statement by the Deputy Permanent Representative of Germany to the United Nations, Heiko Thoms, on behalf of the informal group of like-minded States on targeted sanctions at the briefing of the subsidiary bodies

16 June 2015

I have the honour to speak on behalf of the informal group of like-minded States on targeted sanctions, which comprises Austria, Belgium, Costa Rica, Denmark, Finland, Germany, Liechtenstein, the Netherlands, Norway, Sweden and Switzerland.

The group of like-minded States is grateful for this opportunity to contribute to the discussion today. Our focus on the effectiveness and due process guarantees in the United Nations sanctions regimes is widely known. For the sake of a brief intervention, I would like to reinvite the Security Council and Member States to consider the proposals and ideas which we submitted in writing on 17 April 2014 in document S/2014/286.

In today's statement, I want to focus on the short- and medium-term challenges regarding the transition in the Office of the Ombudsperson. To us it is indisputable that such a transition has to be accomplished in an orderly and timely fashion that neither leaves the office a single day unoccupied nor may render an unfinished delisting case vulnerable to claims of a lack of due process.

Nevertheless, today, less than four weeks from the end of the contract of the incumbent Ombudsperson, this aspiration may be difficult to accomplish. We therefore call for the swift completion of the recruitment and appointment process to ensure that there will be no gap between the terms of the incumbent and the new Ombudsperson.

Resolution 1904 (2009) specifies not only that the Secretary-General, in close consultation with the Committee, appoints the Ombudsperson, but also that the Ombudsperson is to be an eminent individual of high moral character, impartiality and integrity with high qualifications and experience in relevant fields, such as legal, human rights, counter-terrorism and sanctions. We are therefore looking forward to the appointment of a new Ombudsperson who will have the qualifications, skills, experience and international standing necessary for this high office.

We also conclude from the resolution that, in case the successor cannot assume the office in a timely fashion, the Secretary-General would see to a suitable arrangement that precludes any gap in the office. While bearing in mind the five-year contract limit for consultants, under these exceptional circumstances this would mean in our view that the incumbent should be requested to stay in the office until the handover to the successor is duly completed.

The upcoming transition also presents an opportunity to address some of the limitations inherent in the current contractual and administrative arrangements. The status and privileges of the position should fully reflect the independence required to perform the tasks of the Ombudsperson effectively. Furthermore, the applicable administrative arrangements in place for budgeting, staffing, staff management and resource utilization at the Office of the Ombudsperson lack the critical features of autonomy. In fact, structurally no Office of the Ombudsperson has been created despite the decision in Security Council resolution 1904 (2009).

Necessary modifications in these arrangements are overdue and, ideally, should be addressed in the course of the ongoing recruitment processes.

The leadership, dedication and professionalism with which Ms. Kimberly Prost has fulfilled her tasks set the bar high for her successor. He or she should be guaranteed the institutional independence to perform these duties effectively and to the highest standards of integrity that we expect and that petitioners are entitled to. The like-minded group stands ready to engage in a continued dialogue to ensure that the regime complies with fundamental due process guarantees and human rights norms.

Thank you.

United Nations S/2015/460

Security Council

Distr.: General
19 June 2015

Original: English

Letter dated 18 June 2015 from the Permanent Representative of Australia to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

I have the honour to inform you that, on 11 and 12 June 2015, ministers and officials from 24 countries, the European Union and the United Nations, as well as representatives from civil society and the private sector, met in Sydney for a two-day regional summit to counter violent extremism.

Consistent with Security Council resolution 2178 (2014) to enhance cooperation and support each other's efforts to counter violent extremism, ministers agreed to ongoing actions to build international cooperation ahead of a meeting planned for the margins of the General Assembly in September 2015 and at the leaders' level, on countering violent extremism.

In that context, I would be grateful if you could circulate the present letter and the attached official statement of the ministerial component of the summit as a document of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Gillian **Bird**

15-10139 (E) 230615

Please recycle

Annex to the letter dated 18 June 2015 from the Permanent Representative of Australia to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

Official statement of the ministerial meeting, held in Sydney, Australia, on 12 June 2015

Ministers and officials from 24 countries, the European Union and the United Nations, as well as representatives from civil society and the private sector, met today in Sydney, Australia, for the ministerial component of a two-day regional summit to counter violent extremism. The summit built on work commenced at the February 2015 White House summit to counter violent extremism and furthered at the April 2015 East Asia Summit Symposium on Religious Rehabilitation and Social Reintegration, held in Singapore. The Sydney summit aimed to improve regional coordination and build the capacity of Governments, civil society and local communities to challenge violent extremism in order to prevent terrorism.

In addition to facilitating the exchange of models of good practice and building networks, the Summit delivered practical training and capacity-building workshops for both government and civil society participants. Those included working with social media, building community-led rehabilitation and early intervention programmes, and developing inclusive national strategies to counter violent extremism.

Consistent with Security Council resolution 2178 (2014) to enhance cooperation and support each other's efforts to counter violent extremism, ministers agreed to ongoing actions to build international cooperation and collaboration ahead of a meeting planned for the margins of the United Nations General Assembly in September 2015 and at the leaders' level, on countering violent extremism.

In their discussions, participant countries addressed and reinforced their commitment to five key themes.

Regional and international cooperation

- Noted the significant and enduring threat posed by the recruitment of foreign fighters by terrorist organizations and the evolving threat of domestic radicalization to violence of vulnerable individuals, particularly young people
- Underlined that there is no more pressing matter of national and regional security than reducing the threat of terrorism, and committed to counter all forms of terrorism and violent extremism
- Stressed that terrorism and violent extremism cannot and should not be associated with any religion, nationality or civilization
- Recognized that countering violent extremism strategies needs to be holistic, from addressing the underlying conditions conducive to the growth and spread of violent extremism and building community resilience to radicalization, through education and support, to early intervention and rehabilitation programmes, and implementing appropriate legal regimes and codes of conduct, consistent with ensuring respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms
- Underscored that responding to the threat of terrorist groups exploiting the Internet to recruit and radicalize vulnerable individuals requires action by all tiers of government, together with civil society and the private sector

- Reaffirmed their commitment to working cooperatively to support each other's efforts to counter violent extremism, including through information-sharing, capacity-building, coordination of efforts, and sharing lessons learned
- Welcomed the efforts of global and regional organizations to facilitate capacity-building and networking to assist countries to counter the threats of terrorism and violent extremism, and committed to ensuring that regional efforts complement work already under way by organizations including the United Nations, the Global Counterterrorism Forum, Hedayah, the Global Community Engagement and Resilience Fund, and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) and ASEAN-led processes including the East Asia Summit and the ASEAN Regional Forum

Research and information-sharing

- Committed to work with and through key bodies such as the Global Counterterrorism Forum, Hedayah, the United Nations Counter-Terrorism Implementation Taskforce, and the United Nations Security Council Counter-Terrorism Committee and its Executive Directorate to collect and disseminate local, national, regional and global experiences in order to identify good practices that effectively address violent extremism to be considered during the next session of the General Assembly together with the plan of action developed by the Secretary-General
- Underlined that the importance of understanding the reasons why people join violent extremist movements has never been more pressing, and that understanding the process of radicalization is critical to responding to all facets of terrorism and violent extremism
- Noted the responsibility on Governments to support and share local and regional research and expertise drawn from the public and private sectors to contribute to a greater collective understanding of the appeal of terrorist narratives and how they are driving radicalization to violence

Strengthening the role of civil society to contribute to strategic communications

- Underscored that effectively preventing the spread of violent extremism includes empowering those who are best placed to facilitate change, including youth, women, families, religious, cultural and education leaders and community groups
- Acknowledged that effective strategies to counter the threat of online radicalization require Governments to act beyond legislative and law enforcement measures to engage with the community in partnership with industry to promote positive messaging and counter misleading and harmful terrorist narratives
- Noted that the private sector, particularly the media and technology sectors, has a range of tools and resources that can support government and civil society to build resilience to radicalization to violence
- Undertook to seek opportunities to partner with civil society and the private sector to deliver tailored counter-messages, delivered by credible voices, including persons formerly involved in violent extremism, and aligned with government policies to suppress violent extremist rhetoric and counter violent extremism

Supporting vulnerable communities

- Recognized that development entities and the private sector make an important contribution to addressing the underlying conditions conducive to the spread of violent extremism, including through providing employment opportunities, building youth vocational and technical capacities, and encouraging entrepreneurship
- Noted that young members of vulnerable communities have been actively targeted by terrorist groups and agreed that a focused effort needs to be made to discourage and prevent youth from embracing violent extremism
- Noted the importance of empowering families and communities through education and engagement to recognize early warning signs that someone may be radicalizing to violence and how to act

Strengthening community-police relations

- Underscored that positive and trusting relationships between police and the community are a foundation for assisting in the identification and diversion of vulnerable individuals from radicalization to violence, and
- Recognized that counter-terrorism operations and misinformed public debate on legislative and law enforcement responses to domestic radicalization can be perceived negatively by some community groups, eroding police relationships with the community, and agreed that proactive and transparent communication efforts should be engaged to minimize these unintended consequences.

Summit outcomes

Ministers and heads of delegation recognized that the following Summit outcomes will support a regional approach to countering violent extremism and will inform contributions to the meeting, at the leaders' level, in the margins of the General Assembly in September 2015:

- Establish a regional network of civil society groups to foster peer-to-peer learning and partnerships, including with the private sector, and assist with identifying and better utilizing leaders and influencers across the region to reach target audiences
- Develop a regional guide for government and civil society on effective engagement with the private sector, to facilitate closer collaboration on countering violent extremism
- Create a regional best practice guide for the development of non-legislative, legislative and law enforcement responses to inhibit the dissemination of terrorist propaganda
- Develop a compendium of regional counter-narratives to amplify effective messages across the region
- Invest in enhancing the role of communities to challenge terrorist propaganda, including by building the technical capability of grass-roots organizations to elevate non-extremist voices that resonate with target audiences